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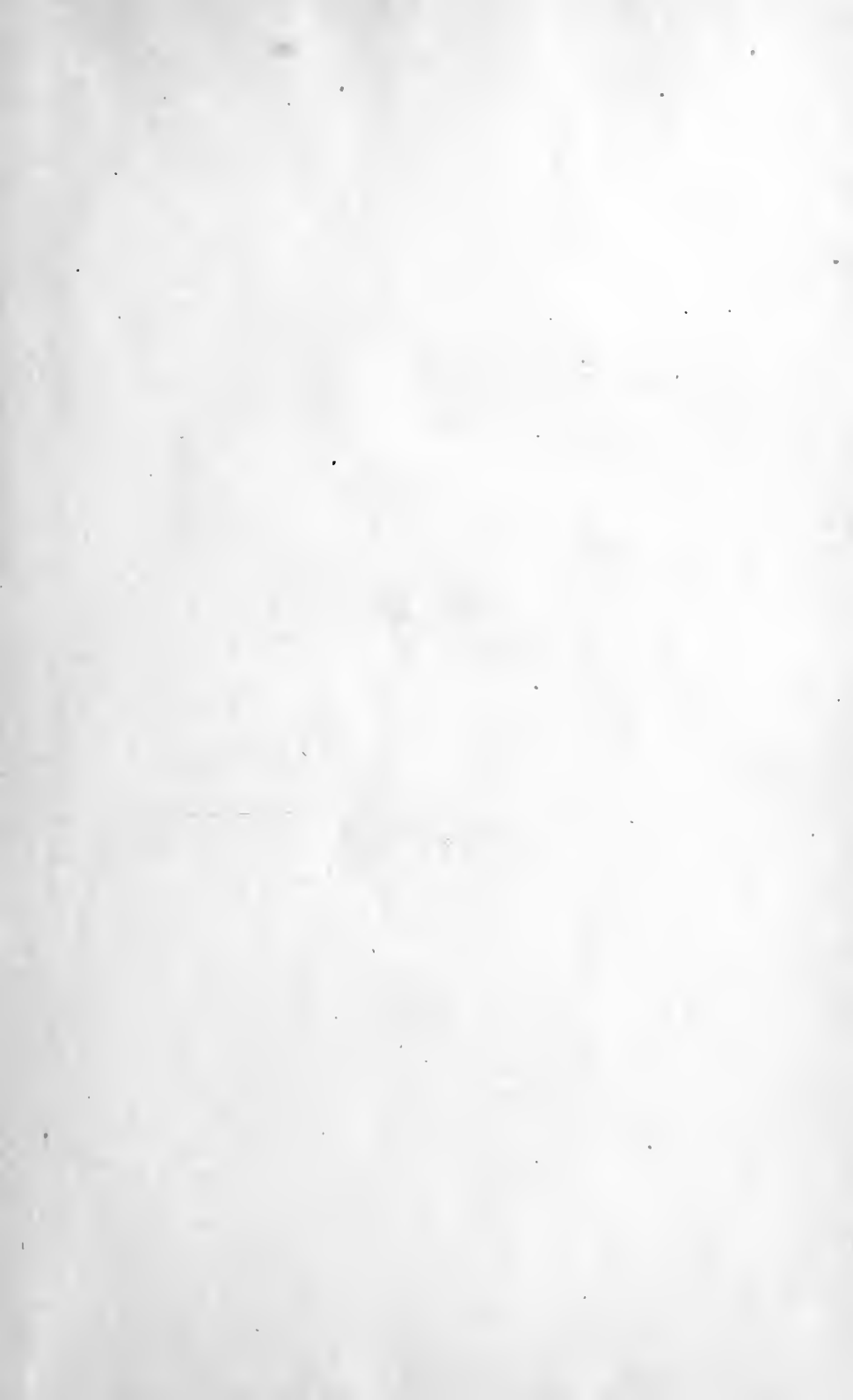


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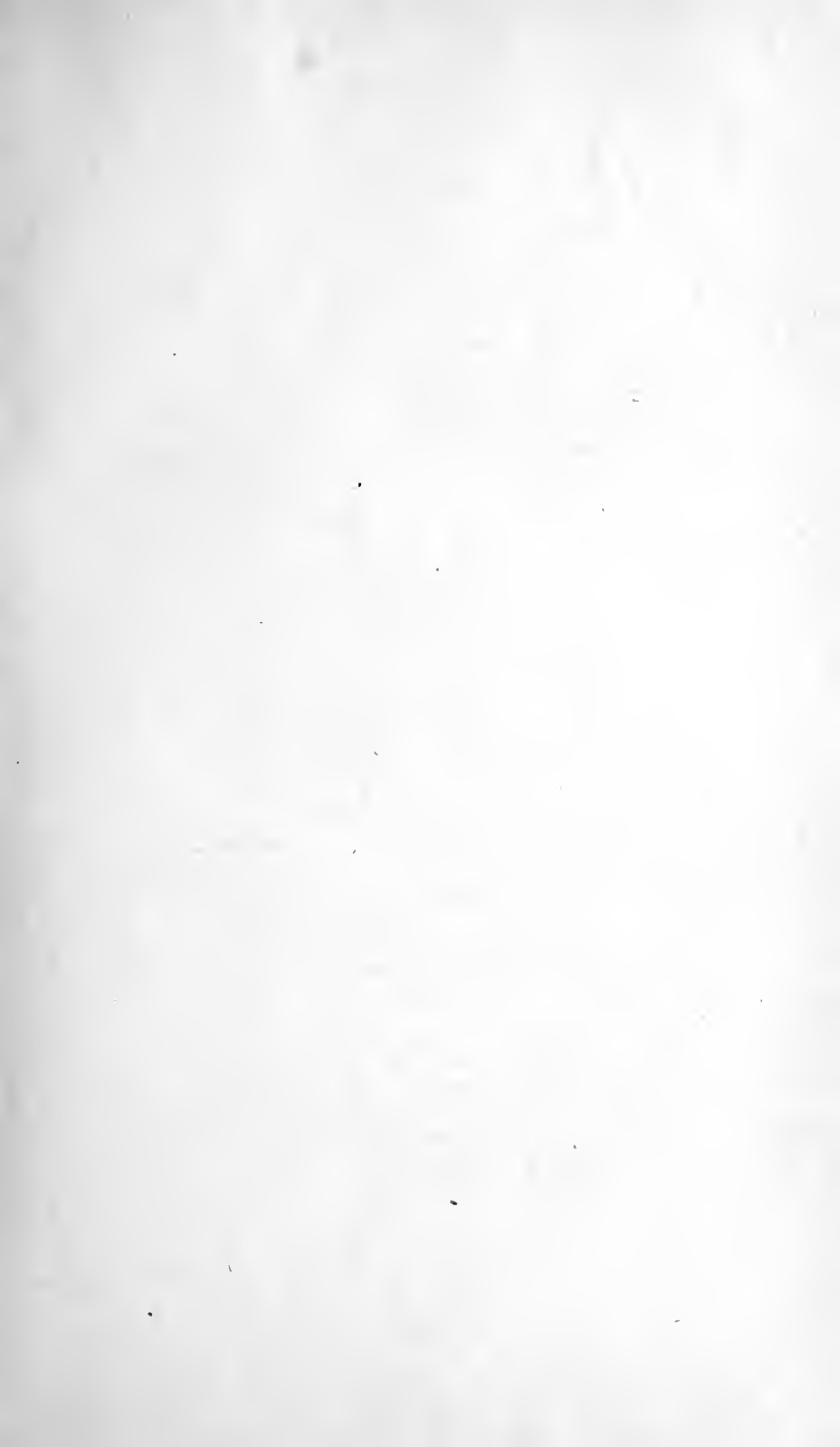
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# **ETHNOGRAPHY**

by

**Loomis Havemeyer, Ph. D.**

and

**Albert Galloway Keller, Ph. D.**



✓ ETHNOGRAPHY

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A Partial and Preliminary Description of the  
Races of Man

by

Loomis Havemeyer, Ph. D.

and

Albert Galloway Keller, ✓ Ph. D.

New Haven, 1917

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### PRELIMINARY NOTE.

The following chapters are a partial collection of material for a text book on Ethnography. They are privately printed by the Department of Anthropology in Yale University for the use of classes in Yale College and in the Sheffield Scientific School.

January, 1917.

LOOMIS HAVEMEYER.

ALBERT G. KELLER.



## CHAPTER I.

### THE BUSHMEN.

**ENVIRONMENT.** The Bushmen live almost entirely along the edges of, and in the Kalahari desert of South Africa. This region is one of the most barren in the world, and it would appear that no human group would ever have come to inhabit this waste, except under compulsion. The flora and fauna are most meagre and the water supply is to all appearances, practically nil. Hence the struggle for existence is very arduous and the numbers are small (in the Kalahari about 5,000, of whom 3,000 to 3,500 are still of unmixed blood), and widely scattered.

**PHYSICAL FEATURES.** The Bushmen in their physique show the result of long privation and of a bitter struggle with a hard environment. They are the shortest race of man, averaging about four feet six inches. The build is thin with the limbs lean, almost emaciated. Even the children lack the roundness of outline common in most other races although they do possess the very pendulous belly. There is almost no fat on the body: the skin is leathery, reddish-yellow in color, and dry in quality, seeming to fit the emaciated body too loosely, and becoming wrinkled at an early age so that it falls into strong folds about the belly and at the joints. The head-characters are: relative smallness; dolichocephaly; moderate prognathism; nose depressed at the root and turned up at the tip; squareness of the full face (prominent cheek-bones and broad under-jaw), so that it has been compared in shape to a rectangle; eyes wide-apart, and squinted (this quality and the furrowed brow going with life in the dazzling light of the desert): lips moderately everted. The individual hairs of the head are rolled into tight peppercorn knots; there is very little hair on the face or body, but what is there is of a weak stubbly nature. In the old, the hair becomes grey, but baldness is seldom seen. The lumbar vertebrae is so mobile that the people can curl up like a dog into a small space. The hands and feet are very small. The characteristic negro-odor is absent. They have greater physical endurance (e.g. in running), than strength, and can go for a long time enduring hunger and thirst recovering soon from the effects. Their senses are very acute.

**CHARACTER AND HISTORY.** The Bushman has truly been characterized as the unfortunate child of the moment; for he is living entirely from hand to mouth with no thought for the morrow. He has been driven back from the fertile

plains by the encroachments of the whites and the stronger native tribes. In the early days of the white habitation of South Africa, regular plans were laid and partially carried out for the wholesale destruction of the Bushmen, but this cruel hunting has now ceased. The natural result of these attacks, was to embitter the native peoples against the whites. This showed itself in raids made on the out-lying farms where the cattle were driven off in large numbers. It is little wonder, then, that the hand of the Bushmen is turned against every man, for they feel that every man's hand is against them.

"They have one ennobling quality, possessed no doubt equally by the beasts: a love of freedom, in which the Bushmen are superior to all other Africans. Unlike the Hottentot, the Bushmen never bowed to the yoke of slavery. In captivity the wild impulse of the genuine son of nature towards freedom never deserts him. Hence a destructive warfare born of savage hatred against all, whether white or black, who wish to limit this impulse; and above all against the herds which cut short the borders of his hunting-grounds."<sup>1</sup>

**LANGUAGE.** The Bushman language is, in general, agglutinative; its striking peculiarity is the use of certain clicking sounds, taking the place of consonants and made by suddenly drawing the tongue away from certain parts of the roof, gums, or teeth; of these clicks there are as many as eight varieties, very difficult of imitation by a foreigner.

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** The Bushmen are entirely a hunting people without any thought of cattle raising or agriculture. So hard are the conditions under which these people are living, that there has been developed extreme dexterity and cleverness in self-maintenance within range of local possibilities. The most vital thing in the Bushman's life is the water-supply; this is appropriated, often by making a depression in the apparently dry bed of a stream and sucking up the moisture through reeds; the women do this, and then store what they have been able to get in ostrich-egg shells, which are buried in the sand to cool the water and for the sake of concealment. There is also a certain bitter melon that grows under ground and is located by the hollow sound of the surface when tapped; its juice is often the only liquid at hand to quench thirst. They eat almost every kind of living creature which they can collect such as insects, lice, worms, lizards, locusts, grasshoppers, frogs, and snakes both poisonous and innoxious. The heads of the former snakes are cut off and then the bodies are roasted and eaten with the other small creatures, The locusts are dried over a fire, ground to a powder and then stored in skin sacks in a dry place to be kept till wanted. When the people are hungry they will make the powdered locusts into a porridge or mix them with honey and make them into a

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, "The History of Mankind," Vol. II, p. 268.

sort of cake. The crysalides of white ants are placed with a little fat on a flat stone over the fire and when they turn brown they are taken off and eaten. The greatest delicacy of all, apart from honey, is the foot of the elephant which is cooked by burying in a hole in the ground after the ashes have been removed.

But the bulk of the food supply is acquired by the use of offensive weapons; either directly or through raids upon cattle-raising neighbors. The chief of these weapons is the bow and arrow, the former a rude, five-foot stave strung with sinews, and the latter between two and three feet long, single-feathered, heavy toward the point, and so constructed so as to leave its poisoned head in the wound. In hunting or war, the small size, keen sight, and noiseless approach of the Bushman make him formidable beyond his slight strength; and the lack of physical power has likewise been balanced off by the use of poison (chiefly derived from snakes or corrupted flesh). The ostrich is approached in disguise—the head and shoulders covered with the skin and the stuffed head and neck of a former victim, and the legs colored white—and with the motions of feeding, etc., proper to the quarry, and is readily shot at close quarters with small poisoned arrows. Other weapons are the spear, only occasionally found, and the knobbed club for throwing or striking. Pitfalls are sometimes used and are dug with a stick weighted with a perforated stone—a tool employed, of course, in other digging operations. Snares are very cleverly made.

The man usually does the hunting after the larger game. Frequently he eats what he wishes while out and leaves the rest where it has fallen rather than bring it home to his wife. This means that the women often go hungry and are obliged to content themselves with the small forms of animal life which they can capture either around the camp or on other members of the family.

**DWELLINGS.** “The Bushman seeks his dwelling in caves and clefts of the rock, in sheltered spots beneath over-hanging stones, or lies down in dry water courses, or in the deserted pit of an ant-bear. It is quite a sign of progress when he bends down the boughs of a shrub, and weaves them with other boughs and moss into a shelter from the wind, heaping up a lair of dried leaves and moss under it.”<sup>1</sup> Only in the rarest cases does he advance to hut-building, when he finds that there is an abundance of game in the neighborhood and he decides to settle down for a prolonged stay. The huts are made by putting three sticks into the ground and covering them with two mats.

When the Bushmen were asked why they did not make stronger and better huts, replied that such huts attached them

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, “History of Mankind,” Vol. II, p. 271.

too much to one spot. An additional reason was the fear that their enemies might burn them all alive in these huts before they could get out; and that there was no way of putting the houses aside during the day to prevent their being seen.

Household gear is almost lacking, for a Bushman has no use for the things which he cannot carry with him. Even domestic animals—whenever he has stolen a herd of them as he does frequently—appear to him a burden of which he wishes soon to be rid. Sharp nosed sheep dogs, which are used in hunting, are found once in a while in his possession. Pottery is seldom used, probably because of the ostrich eggs which are an excellent substitute.

Fire is obtained by rubbing hard and soft wood together; most of the animal food is thrown into the fire for a short time, and at least (or at most) warmed.

When the people sleep they curl themselves up into as small a space as possible. In the floors of their huts around the fire are many little holes in which the members of the family sleep. In cold or rainy weather they do not get up for several days.

**MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY.** Naturally the Bushmen live in small groups, for the environment will not support larger ones, even if they are always on the move. On the average it takes from 40 to 200 square miles to support one person. The parties are, for the most part, family groups, but family organization is little known. Acceptance of presents constitutes acceptance of their “proposing” suitor, and the marriage is ratified by carousing and by return presents, to the adherents of the groom. Parental and fraternal incest are forbidden. Because of poverty the prevailing form of marriage is monogamous; but it is a matter of situation rather than of principle, and adultery is not severely treated.

“As the natural consequence of the general mode of life among these people, the position of woman is low. On their journeys they carry their children, besides the greater part of their property; at the halting-place they have to see to fire, food, water—the last often difficult enough to procure, to the utensils; in short to everything not immediately connected with the chase. If food runs short, they are the first to be stinted, and get ill-treated as well. A weak, old, or sick woman is often left behind without more ado. A bowl of water, a root or two, a bit of meat, are placed beside her; and the wild beasts soon accomplish her destiny. In the treatment of children by their mothers, the animal that is in man equally emerges. They are suckled for a long time, but also in the very first days of life fed upon chewed roots, meat, and other hard articles of diet. They even learn to chew tobacco at an early age. The child grows up without cleaning, watching, tending, without anything to cover its little head, often quite exposed to all weathers; the boy is early initiated by his

father into the mysteries of shooting, tracking game, seeking honey. The only production that gives the impression of costliness and elegance is the sunshade of ostrich feathers which tender Bushmen mothers plait for their children.”<sup>1</sup>

“The Bushmen will kill their children without remorse on various occasions, if they are found to be misshapen, when the food is scarce, when the father forsakes the mother, if they are obliged to flee from farmers or others, in which case the children will be strangled, smothered, cast into the desert or buried alive. These latter things are done in order that they may not fall into the hands of the enemy. There are instances of parents throwing their children to a hungry lion who stood roaring before the family cave, refusing to depart until some peace offering was made. If when a mother dies she has any very young children they are buried alive with her.”<sup>2</sup>

**SELF-GRATIFICATION.** Compared to the severity of the climate the Bushman’s clothing seems very incomplete. He wears a triangular skin loincloth and a sort of cloak (*kaross*), which becomes a wrap for the night; the woman’s *kaross* is somewhat more ample, affording shelter to children in arms. Sandals of hide or bast are sometimes worn. However, what he lacks in clothing he makes up in a coating of dirt all over the body. In fact the ashes and grease which cover the whole body are like a rind.

“Finery is scanty and inexpensive. A few rings of brass or iron, a string of dark beads, some little sticks strung in a row like beads, bits of iron or brass according to taste, decorate neck or hair. Trophies of the chase form a more natural adornment; feathers or hares’ tails in the hair; teeth, hoofs, horns, shells, on the neck and arms. They carry their tobacco in short goats’ horns, or in the pretty shell of a land-tortoise; while boxes of ointment or mysterious amulets are hung around the neck and waist. A jackal’s tail on a stick fulfills the functions of fan and pocket handkerchief.”<sup>3</sup>

**ART.** The Bushmen are very clever in drawing figures of men and animals in crayon and colors. “The few remains of such drawings, which have been preserved on sheltered walls of caves, give the idea of higher artistic skill than the innumerable rock-scratchings of the American Indians. These designs are partly painted on rocks with the four colors, white, black, red, and yellow ochre, partly engraved in soft sandstone, partly chiselled in hard stone. Besides human figures, they accurately represent a number of the characteristic animals—ostrich, antelope, quagga, baboon, also cattle. The occurrence of horses in these Bushman drawings shows what an

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 275.

<sup>2</sup> G. W. Stow, “Races of South Africa,” p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 270.

impression that animal, first introduced by Europeans, made on them.

“The Bushman is like the Hottentot in his turn and capacity for music. Wherever he can snap up an old fiddle from a European, or make a rudimentary one for himself out of a gourd and two strings, he extracts a tolerable tone from the instrument, and reproduces any pretty airs that he may have heard at the mission or in his dances. There is a metallic ring in his voice. Besides the gourd-fiddle we find also the *gora*, and a drum, which often consists of a pot with a little water in it and a skin stretched over its mouth. The function of this music in the Bushman’s life is to accompany the dance. The modulation of the voices are said to be intimately interwoven with the movements of the body. The Bushman dance is a gradual and methodical outbreak of licentiousness reaching the point of convulsion.”<sup>1</sup>

**RELIGION.** The religious ideas of these people are characteristically primitive, and there is probably no conception of a higher being. They are best shown, perhaps, in their belief concerning the dead. The body is taken out through a hole in the wall of the hut, which is then demolished; the family deserting the place immediately. “The dead man’s head is anointed, then he is smoke-dried and laid in the grave in an outstretched position. No rule seems to prevail either as to the quarter towards which the head points nor as to the way in which the arms and legs are laid; but an old Bushman told Campbell that the sun would rise later if dead people were not buried with their faces that way. Then they place stones like a roof over the corpse so as to prevent the earth from falling in upon it, and pile others in an oval form on top. Objects of value according to the Bushmen notions are often put into the grave; thus near Colesberg, Fritsch found a tin ladle, a cup, and sheep and shears, the last on the breast. The wild Bushman put his weapons with the dead man.”<sup>2</sup>

“All Bushmen without exception carry amulets to keep off evil spirits, and bring good fortune in their enterprises. One tribe will not eat goat, though the goat is the commonest domestic animal in their district; others reverence antelopes, others again the caterpillar called *N’gwa*. They try to charm their luck in hunting by means of ‘bull-roarers.’ The custom of cutting off joints of the finger alike as a medicinal process, a sign of mourning, and an expiation, looks like sacrifice. You seldom meet a Bushman whose left-hand fingers have not lost some joints. Traces of a belief in a future life are chiefly to be seen in the monuments erected to great people when dead. Stones are thrown upon chief’s graves so long as the memory of them lasts.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 276.



There are no gods or great spirits; but there is a copious store of legends having to do with the heavenly bodies, and above all with animals. These show not infrequently the results of long and keen observation and of high-class imagination. The animal-heroes are, characteristically, first the lion, then the jackal and hyaena; nearer the Cape the locust is a figure of great prominence. The stories are largely of hunting adventure, and are interspersed with long conversations and soliloquies of the beasts: in their endless reckonings the Bushmen develop a considerable dramatic quality both in gesture and tone. It is probable that the animals are, in a vague way, the objects of worship; certain tribes lay a taboo upon certain animals, though they may be the commonest of the district.

**REGULATIVE SYSTEM.** Definite clan or tribal organization does not appear; nor is there any societal organization of any coherence or lasting quality. Assemblages of families sometimes appoint their most respected member "Kaptein," and he holds a position of some influence as a sort of "select-man," but this is as far as political integration goes. Classes in the population, law other than family precedents, punishment other than retaliatory violence, in short, social forms other than the most primitive and rudimentary, are consistently absent. Relations with neighbors are those of unmitigated hostility; it has been said that the only employment of the Bushmen is in the line of offensive operations in the chase and in war. The latter term must be taken in a restricted sense; the Bushman is a professional cattle-thief, and periodically raids the herds of his neighbors, chiefly the Hottentots. This leads to such stern reprisal that the Bushman is usually shot at sight like a noxious animal. He is against the world and the world against him. The numbers of the Bushmen are rapidly diminishing; the women are sometimes carried off and there has been some race mixture with Hottentots and Bantu; but the genuine wild type of the desert and mountains is preserved only in the isolation of a forbidding and nearly impenetrable environment.

## CHAPTER II.

### HOTTENTOTS.

**ENVIRONMENT AND HISTORY.** The Hottentots, who were formerly very wide spread in South Africa, and who now represent only the debris of a great stock, occupy the western part of Cape Colony and the adjoining German territory. They have been squeezed almost to death between the encroachments of the Europeans advancing from the coast, and the Kaffirs from the interior. The result is that the land which they inhabit is either of the prairie type or the desert. The inhabitants of pure breed are to be found chiefly in Great Namaqualand. Apparently they were encroached upon and driven from a more northerly station into southwest Africa, where they were found by the Dutch in the 17th century. Of full blood Hottentots, called Namas, there are probably less than 20,000. It has been reckoned that the Hottentot-Dutch and Hottentot-Bantu half-breeds, who are scattered all over southwest Africa, number about 180,000. Most of these speak Dutch. The half-breeds with white blood are called Bastaards, and are very proud of this admixture. The Bastaards are said to be the most active and enduring wanderers of the desert, the best shots, cleverest hunters, greatest scamps, most arrant drunkards and most dangerous criminals.

The name, Hottentot, was given by the early Dutch settlers at the Cape. This word is a Dutch onomatopoetic kind to express stammering and was applied because of the staccato pronunciation and clicks of the native language. The people call themselves "Men of Men" (Khoi-Khoi).

The Hottentots and the Bushmen appear to be very distantly related, although they are dissimilar in language, character, manner of living, and physical nature. "According to a Hottentot myth, the first fathers of both lived together—the one a hunter, the other, though blind, yet able to distinguish animals of the chase from domestic animals. He outwitted the hunter, and forced him to go to the mountains, while he himself built his kraal. On the whole, this myth is probably right. At the time of the first discovery the Bushmen were already a degenerate tribe of hunters crowded in between settled nations carrying on stock-raising, with whom for centuries they had lived in open enmity. They seem to have been the original inhabitants of South Africa, and were driven into the less fertile mountains by the Hottentots. Both came from the north, but the Hottentots, migrating with their herds, had

by a secure sustenance, greater power, and were enabled gradually to expel the Bushmen from the better hunting-grounds. Thus the expelled race sank into want and misery, and in its efforts to maintain itself, became involved in quarrels with all its neighbors.

“The opinion which was formerly held, that the Bushmen were only degenerate Hottentots forced by poverty to become robbers, must be set aside as erroneous; though it is true that some scattered Hottentots or Kaffirs have united with the Bushmen and have been compelled to lead a similar life.”<sup>1</sup>

**PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS.** The Hottentots are distantly allied to the Bushmen in physique, showing about the same color and quality of skin, although they are taller by about eight inches. They are thought by some to form an intermediate type between the Bushmen and the Bantu. The cranial capacity is small, being about 1365 c.c., the skull is dolichocephalic, and the face is prognathous. The zygomatic arches are very high; and this characteristic, combined with narrowness of the skull and a pointed shape of the chin, give to the face the shape of two triangles placed base to base, which contrasts with the rectangular shape of the Bushmen face. The eyes are deep sunk and wide apart, the nose is very broad and flat, with the nostrils opening forward, the mouth is large and thick-lipped. The ears are large and lobeless; the hair is short, woolly, and black, and grows gray with age but seldom falls. There is little or no beard. The characteristic of steatopygia is common, as with the Bushmen.

The temperament of the Hottentot is leaden, being thus in contrast to the Kaffir's high courage and blind passion, and to the Bushmen's savage audacity and mercurial disposition.

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** “Cattle-breeding is the pivot of Hottentot life. At the time of the first contact with Europeans the tendency to pastoral life was, owing to the growth of the herds, and the competition with the Bushmen who lived by the game, strong among many tribes, but was afterwards lessened by quarrels, cattle-lifting, and impoverishment. The first settlers could only support themselves by the aid of the natives' herds; while, for the natives, the herds were their only wealth, by means of which they could obtain luxuries and finery. The man who had nothing, sought service with the richer among his people, with the sole object of owning cattle. Cattle was the money and the gold of these races in pre-European times. The tending of the cattle passes to all the inhabitants in turn. For quite young lambs and calves there is a shelter hut of their own. Milking and the sale of milk take place just as with the Negroes, except that the former is the duty of the

<sup>1</sup> G. K. C. Gerland, “Iconographic Encyclopaedia of the Arts and Sciences,” Vol. I, pp. 292-293.

women. Both men and women may drink cows' milk, but sheep's milk is allowed to women only."

"Their diet consisted of the produce of their hunting and their cattle, also of vegetables. The women used to procure such roots and tubers as the monkeys and pigs were seen to grub for most eagerly. But like all Africans, meat was what they always sought most passionately; according to Lichtenstein, no South African savage can bear entire deprivation of meat. At a pinch they singe skins and leather, which they will then chew until it is soft. They boil or broil meat, and roast roots in the embers; but everything is devoured half-raw. The national dish is meat boiled in blood."<sup>1</sup> Yet they eat only those cattle which die a natural death, except on very special occasions.

"The weapons of the Hottentot, at the time of his first intercourse with Europeans, were like those of the Kaffir. The bow took secondary place; like the Bushman bow, it was made of a single stave of strong wood. The arrows had barbed iron heads, hammered thin, on a reed shaft 20 inches long. Their snake poison was no doubt similarly compounded with that of the Bushmen. The quiver was a piece of wood scooped out or hollowed by fire, or was made from the hide of ox, eland, rhinoceros, or elephant. Their chief weapon, the javelin or *assegai*—as it is called even by seventeenth-century travellers, before we have any reports of the Kaffirs—had a plain blade half a foot in length, set on a shaft longer than the height of a man, and sharpened at the butt. According to some, it was poisoned. The last article in their equipment was the stick for striking or throwing."<sup>2</sup>

**HOUSES.** "The Hottentots' huts might equally well be called tents; they can be struck and repitched in a few hours. The frame consists of supple staves, stuck into the ground in an oval, then bent together, and fastened to each other at the top. The enclosed space is, in length, about twice a man's height, and in breadth less than a third. The aperture is only half the height of a man, and a full grown man cannot stand up inside. Close mats are laid over the frame, and hides over them; the whole being weighted with stones as a safeguard against blasts of wind. The mats, the most artistic thing on the premises, are manufactured by the Namaquas as follows. The inner bark of the mimosa is softened in hot water, and by the united chewing-power of the family, and quickly spun into a thread by rolling on the naked thighs. Then rushes or grass-stalks are perforated at intervals of 2 inches, and the thread drawn through by means of a bone needle, a thorn, or an iron bodkin 2 feet in length. Not only are these mats airy in dry warm weather,

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 289.

<sup>2</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 286.

but they swell with damp, and become so close that they keep off the heaviest rainfall. A single pack-ox easily carries the semicircular poles of the hut-frame, the mats, and the two or three utensils—calabashes, milking pail, pots—with the mistress of the house and her offspring into the bargain. In the middle, opposite the door, the interior of the hut displays a hole for the fire—careful housewives always make a hearth of clay—and round it as many sleeping-holes as there are inmates. The household goods are kept on a frame near the door; which can be closed with skins. Its position is easily changed from one side to another, according to the direction of the wind, by shifting the mats, but it is originally towards the east. The construction of these residences is attended to almost entirely by the women. When the modern Hottentot has taken to the rectangular mud-hovel, he often keeps his beehive-shaped hut for sleeping. They build their villages in a circle, house by house, leaving a large wide space in the middle, into which they drive their sheep at night.”<sup>1</sup>

**METALS.** “They only know the use of copper for ornament and finery; and they must have learnt of themselves to smelt it in small quantities. Their mode of smelting iron is that used throughout Africa. Their bellows consists of a goat-skin with wind-hole and earthenware nozzle. Their smith’s work, too, is done in the simple way, with stone hammer on a stone anvil. Indeed their production of iron even in the seventeenth century was so limited that the Dutch from the first imported iron for arm and foot-rings.”<sup>2</sup>

**MARRIAGE.** “Marriage takes place so early that the arrangement of it is the parents’ affair. As with all South Africans it is based on undisguised purchase. It is preceded by an application on the part of a relative of the suitor to the father of the girl, and to herself. If the answer be favourable, his people come the next day to the bride’s kraal with the oxen ordained for the wedding feast, and there slaughters them and arranges the meal.”<sup>3</sup> The number of wives taken is limited only by the ability to feed them. Consanguine marriage is tabooed as far as first cousins. The first-born son is the sole heir.

### **SELF-GRATIFICATION.**

**CLOTHING AND BODY DECORATIONS.** “The clothing of both sexes formerly consisted of loin-cloth and *kaross*. The men wore a thong around the waist, from which depended a piece of jackal’s, wild cat’s, or other small animal’s skin. The women wore a triangular cloth, two corners of which tied in front; an apron depended from the knot, and in the case of adults was ornamented with fringes, hair, and beads. For-

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 288.

<sup>2</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 290.

<sup>3</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 291.

merly, the loin-cloth consisted of a piece of fur with tinkling rings of copper appended to it. Besides this, the women wore a string, passing several times round about their waists, of perforated bits of ostrich egg-shell, and on this girdle tortoise-shells, large and small, containing *buchu* ointment. Girls received all this ceremonially, on attaining maturity. The *kaross*, worn by both sexes, was made by preference of sheepskin, or the fur of jackals or wild cats; while persons of rank had it made of antelope skin. Ladies of better social position wore a mosaic of three and four-cornered pieces of gay shell on the neck part of it."<sup>1</sup> Trousers and cotton petticoats are now worn. A strange survival occurs in that the women still wear the loin cloth beneath the petticoat.

"Both sexes still carry leather pouches hung round their necks, containing knife, pipe, tobacco, money; also little horns, tortoise-shells, and other things as finery or as charms. Children have little bones on their belts. But the rings of metal on the forearm, of ivory on the upper arm, the polished work of which used to arouse the wonder of the Europeans, have become very rare. Therewith also the custom of attaching to them a leather bag for tobacco, provisions, and the like, has fallen into disuse.

"New-born children are at once smeared with mutton-fat. Grown-up people, however, smear their bodies with an ointment of grease, bruised *buchu*-plant, and soot or ochre, drawing lines on it with the fingers. This forms an indispensable part of a Hottentot's make-up. They smear the hair extra-thickly, no doubt as a protection to the head against the heat of the sun. It is still usual, even among Christian Namaqua tribes, for the women to paint their faces with ruddle."<sup>2</sup>

**AMUSEMENT.** Dancing is the chief form of amusement. It is usually held at the first quarter of the moon and lasts all night. Every signal event in life and every change of abode is the occasion for a feast and dance.

**RELIGION.** The religious system of the Hottentots is not highly developed. One of their chief deities is the moon whose appearance is the cause of a great celebration (See above). They believe in ghosts, with the result that they have various ceremonies to ward off the evil influences. If a man goes out hunting his wife kindles a fire and watches it carefully so that it will not go out. Should it be extinguished, however, the man will be unlucky on his expedition. Like many other African tribes they have myths and fables which deal with animals; in some of them a keen practical strain is shown.

**SICKNESS.** In the time of a severe illness the "first thing of all to be done is to call in the witch-doctor, who best

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, pp. 285-286.

knows all the medicaments and their preparation. Above all he performs the 'alterative' process, by killing a sheep and laying its omentum, powdered with *buchu* and twisted into a cord, upon the sick man's head and shoulders; there it must stay until it falls off. The meat of the sheep is eaten by the men or the women, according to the sex of the patient. If the illness is persistent, or danger appears to be present, the witch-doctor tries to ascertain the prospects of recovery by skinning a sheep alive; if the animal runs after the process, recovery may be expected, but otherwise, death."<sup>1</sup>

**FUNERALS.** "At a funeral, when the lamentation was over, the son first killed a ram, and sprinkled its blood on the corpse, which was then bound in thongs in a squatting attitude, and sewn up in mats and skins. Now an outstretched position with feet towards the east seems to be usual. On one of the long sides of the grave a niche was formed, and this was the actual resting-place of the dead, into which he was shut with slabs of stone, poles, and branches. Then the earth was shovelled back into the grave, and a heap of stones raised over it to keep off the hyenas. Sometimes the body is laid in a cleft of the rocks or in a cave. A special aperture is made for taking the dead man out of his hut. Besides lamentations, purification took place. Moreover, after all these ceremonies, animals were solemnly slaughtered by the relatives, and their omenta hung round the neck in token of mourning. The whole kraal then broke up its huts; only that of the deceased person being left untouched, for fear that he might come back."<sup>2</sup>

**REGULATIVE SYSTEM.** "The older reports about the political institutions of the Hottentots lead to the conclusion that they were like those of the other African pastoral peoples. Their history gives sufficient evidence to prove how weak their cohesion was. A hundred years ago they were not extensive nations filling whole provinces with men. Here was a kraal, containing 100, 150, at most 200 souls; two or three days' journey away was another. We find no mention of a prince ruling over several kraals. The political organization of the Namaquas to-day is eminently loose and shifting. The Orlams, immigrant Hottentots from the Cape, form the larger part of the tribes; while the smaller, but internally more adherent, part consists of the pure-blooded Namaquas, who used formerly to consider themselves the 'royal' race. The lack of any higher political organization among the Hottentots is of itself enough to explain how the process of race-disintegration could have been so quickly accomplished. The sporadic attempts at resistance can hardly be called opposition to this; they were merely isolated outbreaks of rage in people driven into a corner. We

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, pp. 290-291.

<sup>2</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, p. 292.

must not be misled by the tales of the old chroniclers of Cape history, who apply in innumerable cases the name of nation not only to small communities but even to single kraals.

“The present political condition of Great Namaqua Land looks like a transition from the tribal organization of the original Nama settlers to the domination of an influential dynasty of immigrant Bastaards. There are still some independent Namaqua tribes, who here and there indulge themselves with a little robbery. For example, the German Empire entered into separate treaties with the Bastaards of Rehoboth, and with Captain Joseph Fredericks of Bethany, who however consented only unwillingly to dispense with the support of the chief of Beersheba.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, pp. 294–295.



## CHAPTER III.

### BANTU—ZULU.

**EXTENT OF THE BANTU PEOPLES.** To the north and east of the Bushmen and Hottentots are the Bantu peoples, whose territory includes Central Africa as far as the Sudan. To be more exact, the northern limit is a line drawn from the mouth of the Rio del Rey on the northern boundary of Cameroons on the west coast through the north end of Lake Albert and then down the Tana River to Nyanza the east coast. The people inhabiting this district belong to one linguistic family although they differ materially in physical features. Some of the tribes which speak this language belong to the Forest Pygmies, others show relationship with the Hottentots, while still others cannot be distinguished from the most exaggerated types of the black West African negro.

The theory which accounts for this wide spread of the Bantu tongue, states that not more than 3,000 years ago a powerful tribe of negroes speaking the Bantu mother-language gradually spread into the south from the very heart of Africa. The small scattered tribes which occupied this country were gradually conquered and absorbed by the victors. The remnants of the original inhabitants are few, and include such people as the Bushmen, Hottentots, and some pygmies in the forests of south-west Nile land. If it had not been for the arrival of the whites in South Africa the whole region would have been rapidly Bantuized, at least as far as the imposition of language was concerned.<sup>1</sup>

The name Bantu signifies "Men." It is now proposed to gain some conception of this group of peoples, from the description of several tribes and groups of tribes.

### ZULU.

**HISTORY AND ENVIRONMENT.** The negroes of the east coast of Africa were given, by the Arabs who early visited that coast, the name "Kaffir," which means "unbeliever" or "heretic." "There are no general or collective national names for these peoples, and the various tribal divisions are mostly designated by historical or legendary chiefs, founders of dynasties or hereditary chieftancies. The term has no real ethnological value, for the Kaffirs have no national unity. To-day it is used to describe that large family of Bantu negroes inhabiting the greater part of the cape, the whole

<sup>1</sup> H. H. Johnston in *Encycl. Brit.* under Bantu Languages.

Natal and Zululand, and the Portuguese dominions on the east coast south of the Zambezi.”<sup>1</sup> One of the principal branches of the Kaffirs are the Zulus, to whom particularly the name has come to be applied in later years.

These people occupy the south-east coast of Africa where nature is more vigorous and fertile, on account of the presence of rainfall, whose lack towards the west is responsible for the desert character of that region. In consequence of the more favorable natural conditions, including a more temperate climate, the southeastern coast and back country is better adapted to the growth of civilization. The conditions do not support any very high development of agriculture, but are favorable to cattle-raising.

“The traveller from the west, on descending from the highlands of the interior through the mountain fringe of the Drakenberg to the low country on the east coast, at once feels that he is surrounded by a more vigorous and fertile Nature, and by a more independent and active population. The beehive shaped kraals of the Natal Kaffirs, in their square enclosure, rise in ever-increasing numbers; their herds are feeding everywhere in the pasturages, and the stately forms that approach to sell the firewood with which the traveller has so long had to dispense, or to deal in other goods, complete a picture which forms a sharp contrast to everything that comes to view of native life and ways in the Cape Colony proper. One notices at once that one has here to do with no indolent breed. The neat build of their huts, the orderly way in which the individual groups are fenced in with wattled work, made a favourable impression.

“Even if the inhabitants go almost naked in warm weather, one feels that one is among men who lead their lives on a regular footing, among herdsmen who live by secure property and their own labour, not by chance and the uncertain bounty of Nature. Such is the country of the Zulus, historically the greatest, strongest, most permanent power that the Kaffirs have till now founded.”<sup>2</sup>

**PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS.** The Zulus are the “greatest, strongest, most permanent” Kaffir power. Physically they are the handsomest and most powerful stock. While the Zulu is plainly of the negro type he is not of the “animal” type found in several other regions of Central Africa. The color is dark brown; the stature is tall and the body powerful and well formed. The Zulu has a fresh and healthy appearance and differs very greatly from the Bushmen-Hottentot stock. Some observers, in enthusiasm over the physical proportion of the Zulus have proclaimed them “models for sculpture.”

<sup>1</sup> Encycl. Brit. under “Kaffirs.”

<sup>2</sup> Ratzel, “The History of Mankind,” Vol. II, p. 420.

The characteristic features of the negro are, however, permanent, in the broad flat nose and everted lips. But the chin is pointed, the face rather long, and the eyes large. The expression is in most cases intelligent and alert. The hair is of the negro type: short and black, tightly curled and tufted. The beard, where there is anything deserving that name, is generally thin.

The Zulu temperament is energetic; "all there"; and there is exhibited a strong will, rapid decision, and great courage. However, despite this bravery, the Zulus have never been able to bring to a fortunate end a war with the Europeans, however much they have outnumbered them. The courage exhibited is that of the sudden and reckless attack, but like many native peoples, although they have caused the Europeans in South Africa a great deal of trouble, the Zulus have not the staying power.

Neighbouring groups of Bantus allied to the Zulus, show departures from these characteristics: the Bechuanans are of a softer and more gentle stamp, while the Matabele are wild and savage conquerors, and particularly the scourge of the neighboring agriculturists. A perusal of the life of Cecil Rhodes, after whom the district of Rhodia has been named, throws much light upon the characteristics of these tribes.

**LANGUAGE.** The Zulu language is of the regular Bantu type, which may here be illustrated once and for all. It is agglutinated through the extensive use of prefixes. For example, the word for "boy" is *um-fana*, where the plural is *aba-fana*. By way of contrast with a language using suffixes it might be stated that the Latin *vinum bonum* would become, by the prefix method, *um-rin* and *um-bon*. There is a Bantu tribe called the *Ba-suto*. Probably the form *Suto* is the name of some ancient chief. The singular of *Ba-suto*, that is, the name of one individual of the tribe is *Ma-suto*; then the territory occupied by the *Ba-suto* is called *Le-suto*, and the language spoken is *Se-suto*. Further illustration may be given on the basis of the term *bono* (equals, to see): *eci-bono* (things seen), *eci-boniso* (vision); *bon-akala* (appear). Then *eci-bon-akala* equals appearance; and *eci-bon-akalaiso* equals revelation. A sentence is formed as follows: Bantu (men) *ba-atle* (all) *ba-molenno* (good) *ba-lefetsi* (the world) *ba-ratoa* (the beloved). This combination means; "in the world, all good men are beloved."

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** "Though cattle-dealing is the chief business of the Southeastern Kaffirs (Zulus), agriculture is in no way neglected; their climate and soil permitting it in a very comprehensive form \* \* \* \* The larger agricultural operations are performed by the community. At the season of planting, which is fixed yearly by the chief, the whole field is hoed over; then, with the first rain, follows the sowing of Kaffir 'corn' or maize, to the accompaniment of shouts and

singing. Besides this, the two herbs of which the Zulus smoke incredible quantities, tobacco and hemp, are widely cultivated. Hemp is common enough in a wild state; and tobacco has for some years been found in places where villages have stood. Watch-towers are constructed in the fields, of timber and brushwood; the whole family lives in the lower room during harvest, and a watchman sits above to drive away the grain-eating birds. Harvest takes place in January.

"Thus the Kaffir gets his food about equally from his fields and from his herds. The basis of it is sour milk, *amasi* and bruised maize, *amabele*, or millet, *umbla* \* \* \* \* Meat is eaten alike boiled or roast, and is much relished by the natives. According to Gardiner's estimate four or five can manage to eat up a whole ox—entrails, sinews, and all, in a day and a half. A well-to-do Kaffir always has, at his morning and evening meals, over and above his porridge with *amasi*, vegetables, beer, often meat, and in the intervals enjoys plenty of snuff and tobacco, and perhaps *dakka* as well."<sup>1</sup>

**VILLAGES AND HOUSES.** Zulu villages are, as a rule small, containing five hundred to a thousand people. The paternal house forms the center of the patriarchal family group. But they have developed barrack towns, the larger ones garrisoned by six hundred to a thousand men. It is said that the Zulu king could put fifty thousand men, some say one hundred thousand, in the field at short notice.

"In architecture, considerable differences prevail. Since according to his law the land belongs to the tribe, the Kaffir has to get the chief's permission to build. Like a true nomad he first puts up the cattle-pen, *isibaya*, by surrounding a circular space with a fence or hedge; or in districts where wood is scarce, with a wall of stones or turf. The huts, one apiece for the husband, for each of his wives, and for each adult member of the family, are erected in a semicircle close round the cattle-pen. The man gets some 200 pointed laths 12 feet long and sticks them in a circle in the ground; the woman binds them together at the top with liana-fibres, fastens reeds or grass over them, and spreads the space within with a mixture of earth and cow-dung."<sup>2</sup>

**WEAPONS.** The Zulus are intensely military and possess characteristic weapons in the spear, shield, and club. These weapons are used also with great effectiveness in the chase. The original weapon was a light throwing javelin; and later one of the Zulu kings, Chaka, introduced the assegai by which the Zulus have been characterized. This national weapon has a double edged steel blade six inches long and about an inch wide, set on a shaft over a yard long. The Zulus also bear an oval ox-hide shield which covers a man of middle height to

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, "Mankind," Vol. II, pp. 432-434.

<sup>2</sup> Ratzel, "Mankind," Vol. II, p. 430.

the mouth. Since it hinders rapid movement, it is commonly thrown away in pursuit or in flight. It is, however, a point of honor not to lose the shield. It is really the symbol of the warrior, and it is very honorable to make one. This is done often by the chiefs. The use of spears and shields is constant, for the Zulus are always practicing, in their games and dances the arts of war and the chase.

**MARRIAGE.** The strong military organization of the Zulus vitally influences marriage and the family; especially in the past was this the case when the family was entirely subordinate to the military organization. The kings, to keep up the numbers of their warriors made them marry late—the chiefs themselves were not supposed to marry. Consequently there were many women for a minority of men no longer fit for service; and so there was a natural development of polygamy and infanticide.

Marriage and the family were organized on the patriarchal type, as is regular with cattle-raisers; and the position of woman was relatively low. Marriage was regularly by purchase and had become inveterate in the mores.

“When the Colonial Government some years ago, formed the idea of legislating against this custom, called *ukulobola*, they got into more difficulties than with any other reform. The custom is most deeply rooted in the hearts of the women, whose sense of their own value increases according to the number of cattle for which they are bought. Equally little would a man be disposed as a rule to take a wife for nothing; he would feel himself lowered thereby. The bond of wedlock acquires its first mutual recognition by means of the purchase.”<sup>1</sup>

Incest is carefully avoided, the union of brother and sister, uncle and niece, aunt and nephew, being strictly tabooed. There is a good deal of unchastity before marriage, but, the marriage being once entered into adultery is severely punished as an offence against property rights.

“The wedding ceremony, which takes a similar course among all South Kaffirs, consists among the Zulus of the ceremonial transference of the bride to the bridegroom’s hut, escorted by the relations and friends in great numbers. They bring two oxen, one to be slaughtered in order to move the higher powers to bestow prosperity on the new household, the other to form the nucleus of a new herd in the bridegroom’s pen, denuded by the purchase of his bride. Formerly a grindstone, a broom, and a bowl were handed to the bride; a sheaf of assegais and an axe to the bridegroom, to indicate their future callings. Among the Kosas the bride pulls a feather from the bridegroom’s headdress and sticks it in her own wool. Then she seizes a spear, goes solemnly to the cattle kraal, and throws it over the fence, so that it remains sticking in the

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, pp. 434–435.

ground. The wedding feast is prepared with one ox of the bridegroom's, which is slaughtered by the senior man of his village, and another which he presents to his mother-in-law. This is followed, among other tribes, by the washing with beads. First the bride, from a calabash containing water and beads, sprinkles the hands of the bridegroom and of her friends, then he does the same by her and his friends; then the beads are poured out, and everyone snatches at them."<sup>1</sup> Lastly, the village seniors even soar to the point of recommending to the young couple diligence and good conduct; nor are fine words absent from their discourse.

Defective children are put to death, and there is a good deal of general infanticide; but if the young are allowed to live, their relations to their parents are commonly close. The Zulus practice the common majority-ceremony when the young are inducted into full membership in the group. These include circumcision (which has declined in recent time), change of name, immersion in a stream, etc. On this occasion instruction is given to both boys and girls.

**RELIGIOUS IDEAS.** Religion is of about the same type throughout Central and South Africa. It is typical animism and cultus of the dead. In dealing with the latter, and with the spirits, there are sacrifices at the grave, including human sacrifices, with attendant cannibalism. The effort is made to keep in free touch with the deceased. There is also a high development of fetishism and witchcraft. Witch doctors, who are also rain makers in the dryer sections, have their usual importance among primitive peoples. Zulu life from cradle to grave is entangled and confined by the most complicated clemency and foolish time-wasting usages."<sup>2</sup> Much is made of amulets and other religious devices.

In dealing with the spirits, the Zulus show the usual primitive daimonism. Though they endeavor to keep on good terms with the dead they have a number of methods of avoidance and exorcism. They recognize the spirit of heaven, and among them the functions of creation and of great supernatural power are assigned to the "old old one" (*Unkulunkulu*). It is *Unkulunkulu* not *Itango* the supreme spirit who created man. On the occasion of an earthquake, threatening gestures are made to the sky and there are ceremonies in connection with the moon. There is a considerable amount of worship of trees and animals which verges over into *totemism*; and there is an extensive mythology along all these lines as is common among primitive peoples and among Africans in particular.

It is impossible to go into the details of religious observances, but it is possible to say that those of the Zulus exemplify the principles laid down by Tylor, Chapters 14 and 15, and by Spencer, Volume I, part 1, of the "Principles of Sociology."

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, "Mankind," Vol. II, pp. 435-436.

<sup>2</sup> Ratzel, "Mankind," Vol. II, p. 369.

“Were it not,” says one observer, “for the suspicion in native character and customs, and the misery flowing from it, the Bantu-Kaffirs would be happy barbarians, especially Zulus whose good nature, humor, sociability, hospitality, mildness, and honesty are striking characteristics.” It might be queried whether the Zulus or any other savage peoples are any more “unhappy” because they are immersed in their own set of mores, than are civilized observers, for whom life amidst these mores seems unattractive.

**REGULATIVE ORGANIZATION.** The Zulu government is a limited despotism. The king has beside him two *indunas*, one a sort a minister and the other a commander-in-chief. The government appears, therefore, to be a sort of triumvirate. The king has no power to declare war, to pronounce capital sentence, or to divide land, without the approval of the *indunas*.

“Yet a whole list of privileges belong to the king, showing that he holds, in regard to the mass of the people, the position of a patriarchal tribal chieftain. His is the right of ownership over all the land and all the property of the people; there is no personal property in land, only certain rights affecting the situation of the villages and pastures. Yet the king has the *usufruct* of a number of villages, just as the higher *indunas* usually own one or more. Similarly, the king has a power of disposal, though often limited, over the lives and the time of his people. Confiscated goods form a main source of a Kaffir chief’s revenue, in addition to more or less voluntary presents. These are especially plentiful at a declaration of manhood. No subject may receive a present without the king’s permission. Yet he is in truth no lazy oriental despot, but has a long list of duties, by no means trivial, to perform. As supreme war lord he has to feed, equip, and when necessary pay his soldiers, to encourage and to punish them. He superintends his herds, which are in so far state property that the army is victualled on the meat of them, and its shields are cut from their skins.”<sup>1</sup>

The basis of the Zulu state is a military constitution. The army which they possess is one of the most complete and efficient and permanent organizations of any Negro state. The youths are trained from their earliest years in military matters; in fact the kraals are really great camps where the men and boys are divided into certain military categories. At one time they could have put between 50,000 and 100,000 men into the field, half of whom were kept, even during times of peace, on a war footing.

War is not a series of mock battles, as is the case with so many of the savage peoples, but rather a very bloody affair where frequently an entire army will be wiped out. Even the Europeans have had much difficulty with these daring people,

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, “Mankind,” Vol. II, p. 437.

although in the end the more civilized race has always conquered.

The Zulu jurisprudence is cruel, but relatively advanced; there are a good many points of agreement between the Zulu system and that of the civilized peoples, and it is here that the civilized influence can, in consequence, get a hold. However, this influence is less far reaching than is sometimes thought. In 1872 Cetewego was persuaded not to execute without a trial, but this never went into effect, for it struck at the very root of the monarchy. Much time and trouble was spent in arriving at what they considered justice. The judges were the under-chiefs and the king, the finding of the latter being final. Under the King Chaka all theft was punished by death; also sneezing and clearing the throat in the king's presence, and the exhibition of dry eyes at the death of a member of the royal house. For lighter offences there were fines in cattle. Theft came to be atoned for by a restitution of from two to ten times the amount stolen; and under was paid for in cattle (five or six head), if the relatives agreed. But a great variety of capital punishments persist including hanging, twisting the neck, throttling, and impaling. The bodies of those executed are left to the wild beasts.

“Their judicial procedure recognizes an oath by deceased parents or chiefs, or by the living king, and treats precedents with respect. The proceedings run into oratorical breadth. A man who purposes to bring a complaint against another assembles his friends or neighbours, who go with him, armed, to the hut, or village of the defendant, sit down there in a conspicuous place, and await the effect of their presence. Presently the grown men of the neighbourhood or village collect over against them, and wait in similar silence. One from among them now calls to the, as a rule, unwelcome visitors, ‘tell us the news.’ The spokesman gives a precise exposition of the complaint; his own companions interrupt him with a host of additions and emendations, and the opposite party with endless cross-questioning. At first, however, the proceedings do not get beyond this. By next day the accused parties have brought up men who are known as practised debaters. These begin to represent their view of the case, and the complainants have to bring theirs forward afresh. Now the effort is made to relate each individual point with the utmost obstinacy and subtlety. When a speaker is tired another steps in, and goes again over the well-laboured field with the plough of fresh arguments. But if all pleas and counter-pleas on both sides are exhausted, the complainants withdraw, and both parties consider the advantages and disadvantages of their position. If one feels that it cannot maintain its case, it starts with the offer of the smallest possible compensation. If no decision is arrived at, a summons from the complainants to the *umpakati* of the neighbouring



district follows. In his presence the whole dispute is now once more gone through at length."<sup>1</sup> Frequently this goes on for a week or more until finally the case has been reviewed by everyone of importance. The chief at last gives a decision which has to be lived up to.

Trespasses against the king are punished with savage severity. Frequently for such a trespass a man's whole house and goods might be "eaten up."

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. II, pp. 444-445.

## CHAPTER IV.

### BANTU—BAGANDA

**ENVIRONMENT.** The Baganda occupy a portion of the so-called Uganda Protectorate around Lake Victoria Nyanza. This name, Uganda, is really incorrect, for it comes from the native name Buganda in which the Bu was pronounced U by the early explorers. This region is one of the most productive in Africa, possessing a tropical climate for the most part, and showing the usual luxuriance of vegetation and of animal life characteristic of that climate. The topography is varied, having lofty plateaus, snow-capped mountains, vast swamps, dense forests, and regions of desolate aridity.

#### PHYSICAL CHARACTERS.

**HISTORY.** The Baganda show no distinct physical type, but represent the "West African Type." They are big men, tall, loose-limbed, muscular, clumsy—showing but little of the grace and suppleness of the Zulus. The type is typically negroid, although the men show a development of the beard beyond the ordinary. The expression is mild and agreeable, and the disposition is polite and artistic. Johnston calls them the "Japanese of Central Africa."

This region has shown a tremendous decrease in population, from four million to one million (1901). There was an appalling blood-shed between 1860 and 1898, during the wars and raids with the Unyoro and in the civil wars.

"But another cause seems to have been the exhaustion of men and women by premature debauchery. From some cause or another the women of Uganda have become very poor breeders. If a woman has more than one child she is looked upon as quite remarkable, and is given a special honorific title. If ever a race needed a puritan revival to save it from extinction, it is the Baganda."<sup>1</sup>

Sex disease has ravaged the population; its nature is not understood, for mothers think it is due to eating salt during pregnancy, and women are beaten if their children die of it.

The Baganda are subject to various diseases, among them malarial fever—to which, however, they seem susceptible only if they leave their own country. This same peculiar condition applies in the case of dysentery. Smallpox has had its ravages, and chickenpox and mumps make a great deal of trouble. A peculiar ethnic disease is yaws which commences with ulcers on the feet and spreads over the body. Some leprosy is found but bubonic plague is more feared. Phthisis is extremely rare,

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, H. H., "Uganda Protectorate," Vol. II, p. 642.

but skin diseases and parasites of all kinds are common. Dyspepsia from eating beyond the powers of their strong digestions, is not uncommon. The worst diseases next to syphilis is the sleeping-sickness which is brought on by the bite of the *tsetse* fly, and is said to be invariably fatal.

There is an enormous infant death rate, but the population, it is said, are making the endeavor to be sanitary—except as to their persons. They attempt to keep their houses clean and the surroundings of their houses very clean.

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** The chief industries of the Baganda are agriculture and cattle-raising. As domesticated animals they keep the ox, goat, sheep, fowls, and dogs, although they never of themselves made any progress, to speak of, in domestication. They use milk for food, having been taught by Europeans, but not because of any original fondness for the liquid. Cattle-keeping has never taken the hold on these people that it has on the people of less distinctly negro character to the east and to the west.

Although the people raise the sweet potato, maize, and tobacco yet their greatest product is the banana or plantains. The people have large groves of these trees which they tend very carefully by cutting out all the underbrush. There are thirty-one different kinds cultivated in Uganda.

“As regards the food of these people, they are fond of meat when they can get it, either by killing goats, sheep, cattle, or wild animals. Meat is sometimes cooked in water with red pepper and the spicy grains of the amomum, or it is grilled over the fire on a rough gridiron. The common practice is to run lumps of flesh onto wooden spits and stick them up in a slanting position over the fire.”<sup>1</sup> Fish enters largely into the diet of these people. Locusts are eaten roasted after the wings have been pulled off, and white ants are considered quite a delicacy. But the staple food is the banana. This is prepared by boiling a lot of them together in a solid mass. This is placed in the center of the family circle, each one helps himself to a small amount which he rolls into a ball, dips into gravy, and then eats. It is considered almost a sin to drop any of this gravy when the balls are removed to the mouth. Children are severely reprimanded for such an impropriety.

The chief drink is a sweet beer made from the juice of the banana. This is very heady and the Baganda are frequently tipsy from its use but not stupified or frantie. They also chew the pulp around the coffee berry but they have no beverage from this plant. They raise excellent tobacco with little care, and both sexes smoke it in clay pipes. The smoking of hemp so infuriates them that the practice has been prohibited by native law.

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 671.

The status of their agriculture is not remarkable; in common with other Central Africans they do not have the plough. Though their tobacco grows rankly on the dung hills, they have no idea of manuring, but burn the undergrowth and dig the ashes into the soil thus preceding in the wastefulness many of the ancient "brand tillage."

The Baganda native weapons are the spear and the shield, the latter a pointed oval bent on the metal. They do not use the bow and arrow or swords. In hunting they were formerly very adroit and were also skilful in lake fishing, chiefly with weirs.

**HOUSES, VILLAGES.** The typical house in Uganda is a perfect circle with two door-ways, one opposite the other. Outside, the conical roof is prolonged, so that it covers the porch. This roof is a heavy thatch, sometimes a foot in thickness, made of fine long grass which over the front of the house and over the porch is shaved off with sharp knives to a smooth edge. "This gives the house a very neat aspect, and is a great improvement on the untidy, sweeping straws which usually terminate an African's thatch. The interior of the house and the outer walls of the porch and the front veranda are most neatly covered with cane-work. This is made of long stalks of the elephant grass packed closely together in an upright position, and bound by traverse bands of bast. This cane-work is almost a specialty of the Baganda, and with it they clothe unsightly poles, which then become glistening columns of pale gold \* \* \* \* \* .

"A large house may contain, besides the central fireplace (generally a raised dais of hard clay on which stand the three big round stones which compose the African's grate), from one to five sleeping berths, usually beds of raised clay partially surrounded by screens. Curiously enough, in many of the houses, even of the better class, there is a partition on the left of the interior from the principal entrance which serves as an enclosure for cattle, one or more milch cows being kept there with their calves. Some of these cows are extremely tame, and walk in and out of the houses with great care and deftness, never upsetting or injuring the frail screens through which they have to pass. It may be supposed that these tame cows introduce a certain amount of dirt and smell into the house; but as regards cleanly habits they seem to be as well trained as a domestic dog or cat.

"At the back of the principal dwelling-house there are smaller and less neatly built huts which serve as cooking places, and sometimes as separate dwellings for supernumerary women or children, and attached to every establishment is a privy. In the courtyard which contains the principal dwelling, there may still be seen a small fetish hut near the house and

close to the gateway leading into the courtyard. Every Uganda house of importance has attached to it a series of neatly kept courtyards surrounded by tall fences of plaited reeds. In visiting a chief one may pass through four or five of these empty courtyards, in which followers of the chief stand or squat under shady trees. Any really big chief or the king of Uganda would have in one of these courtyards a band of music, a number of men with drums, fifes, and horn trumpets, who would greet the arrival of distinguished strangers by striking up some melody."<sup>1</sup>

"The Uganda town is a series of villa residences surrounded by luxuriant gardens. Occasionally there is an open square formed by the meeting of two broad roadways, and this may be the site of a market or a place of reunion for the people. Narrow paths may circulate between the huts of peasants or as byways, but as a rule the Muganda prefers to make roads as those in vogue in civilized countries at the present day. The public ways are kept fairly free from the growth of vegetation, but no attempt is made, of course, to metal their surface, and consequently the heavy rains cut deeply into their clay soil, so that the roads in their present condition are quite unsuited to wheeled traffic.

**ROADS.** "The Uganda road is like the old Roman road. It aims, or attempts to aim, straight at its destination, perfectly regardless of ups and downs. The natives never dream of negotiating a hill by taking the road round it by a gentle gradient. On the contrary, it always seems to the wearied traveller that the person who laid out the road looked round the horizon for the highest point and made straight for it by the steepest ascent. As a matter of fact, the roads are carried with tolerable correctness from point to point along the shortest route. It is when the Baganda come to one of their many thousand marshes that they show both perseverance and skill."<sup>2</sup>

"Across these marshes the Baganda build causeways, which, though perhaps not sufficiently strong for heavy wheeled traffic, are generally quite solid enough for foot passengers and people on horseback. The causeway is usually made by driving poles into the marsh and building along these two rows of piles a coarse basketwork of withes and canes. Between these walls of basketwork are thrown down a quantity of papyrus stalks and branches of trees. Poles are fastened at short intervals above this groundwork of indiscriminate vegetation, and keep the opposite walls of basketwork from falling in. An immense quantity of mud and sand is then thrown down along the causeway, and gradually built up to a

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 652-656.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 656-657.

high, hard road some six feet above the surface of the marsh. At intervals tunnels are made in the basketwork as rough drains through which the slowly percolating water of these choked rivers may find its way. The weakness of this plan seems to lie in the perishable nature of the foundations. The immense quantity of papyrus leaves and branches which are thrown down at the bottom of the causeway rot by degrees and shrink in volume. This causes holes to form in between the poles. At the same time, one has only to travel in countries like Uganda outside the limits of Uganda civilization to realize what a boon these dry roads are across the interminable marshes."<sup>1</sup>

**BOATS.** "The Uganda canoe, like the Uganda house and road is a thing peculiar to Uganda. \* \* \* The foundations of the boat consist of a keel made from the long, slender stem of a tree, which may be as much as fifty feet long. The keel is straightened and slightly warped, so that it presents a convex aspect to the water. This long tree-trunk is a semicircular hollow, the interior having been burnt out with fire, aided by the chipping of axes, and it is of sufficient girth to form by its breadth the bottom of the canoe."<sup>2</sup> Planks are fixed to the side to form the gunwale. The boats are propelled entirely by paddles although the people know the use of sails.

**MARRIAGE.** "With regard to marriage, the peasantry, or 'Bakopi,' follow this procedure: A man has generally ascertained that his advances will be favorably received before he makes any definite move. If he meets the girl, he asks permission to speak to her elder brother or uncle, and if she consents the peasant buys two gourds full of native beer, and repairs to her father's house. The brother or male relative meets him at the entrance to the enclosure that surrounds the house, takes the beer, and conducts the suitor to the girl's father. As soon as the beer is disposed of, the father mentions certain articles that he should like as a present, possibly 10,000 kauri shells, a goat, a bundle of salt, and a few strips of bark-cloth. The suitor then retires and does the best he can to obtain the quantity of each article mentioned. If he is a rich man, he will not take long, but in any case he must not return for the bride before three days. This is the period universally allowed for making her ready—that is, shaving her hair and anointing her all over with oil. After a lapse of an interval ranging from three days to a month and a half, the suitor returns with the shells and other things, probably costing, all told, some 18S. to 20S. These things are given to the father of the girl. At the same time, the suitor must not have forgotten to bring a small calabash of beer for the bride's sister. When

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 658.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 659.

these things are handed over, a party is formed at the father's house and all proceed to the bridegroom's house, beating drums and singing. The afternoon, evening, and night are spent in dancing and drinking beer. In the morning the party separates, and the ceremony is finished, the bride remaining with her husband."<sup>1</sup>

Marriage between first cousins is tabooed and the curious practice of avoidance of the mother-in-law exists. She must not go into her daughter's house or speak to her son-in-law, and if there is an accidental meeting with him both parties must turn aside. When visiting her daughter the mother-in-law stays twenty yards away from the hut and the daughter comes out. "If the son-in-law is indoors, and in view from outside, the mother-in-law may shout \* \* \* 'How dost thou?' And the son-in-law may answer her from inside the hut, but it would be a gross breach of etiquette either to carry the conversation further, or for the mother-in-law to look at the door, or her son-in-law to glance at her from within the hut."<sup>2</sup>

Adultery was once punished by "chopping up alive together;" now by fines. The man may be whipped, but a woman never; and the wife is not discarded. At the time of birth, the wife is not delivered in her husband's house, but in a shed or in a house borrowed from a friend. Her mother and other women attend her; and it is a breach of etiquette for her husband to visit her during the four days absence. The paternal grandfather names the child, whose standing depends little, if anything, on the rank of the mother. The Baganda women may not eat fowls or mutton or eggs after they are married. Inheritance is by election rather than by prescribed right; but the widows of the deceased do not become the wives of the heir.

The Baganda are divided into twenty-nine clans, and marriage inside the clan is common. The clan has a sort of totem called *muziro* signifying "something I avoid for medical or other reasons."

**SELF-GRATIFICATION.** The Baganda practice no body mutilations such as circumcision, scarring, tattooing, ear-piercing, or knocking out of teeth, but they wear iron, copper, lead, or ivory bracelets or necklaces of the same materials. They do not take much trouble with the hair. "This is very abundant in growth, but they generally cut it short. There are certain occasions, however, on which the hair is allowed to grow. A widow is expected to leave her hair at least two months uncut after the death of her husband. She may even let the growth of the hair extend uninterruptedly for five or six months, if she

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 687-688.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 688.

wishes to show that her sorrow is intense. It is sometimes noticed that there is a circular bare patch on a man's head where the hair has been shaved, almost like a tonsure. The explanation of this is that the tonsured individual is subject to fever or has frequent headaches. He therefore keeps a portion of his head shaved, so that it may be readily scarified and cupped.'<sup>1</sup>

There is a strong feeling for what they call decency; the exposure of the legs in the king's presence calls down a fine. However, the valets to King *Mutasa* were young women who were entirely unclad.

The clothing of all was formerly made of bark-cloth, and it is still etiquette to wear it at court. The Muganda winds a strip of it around his hips and between his legs, even though he wears trousers over it. There is a growing partiality for white cloth garments which are constantly washed. These extend from the neck to the ankles.

The Baganda are very fond of the simple primitive music which they know how to make. One of their instruments is the flute which is made from hollow reeds or sections of bamboo. The drum is a hollow tree trunk covered with lizard skin.

"The harp of the Baganda is interesting because its identical form is repeated in the paintings of ancient Egypt, where the instrument must have had its origin, reaching Uganda by way of the Nile, or by the roundabout route which ancient trade followed from Egypt to Somaliland and from Somaliland to Uganda. This type of Egyptian harp may also be noticed in the possession of the Sudan tribes along the Congo watershed and in the vicinity of the Niger, and I am not sure but what it does not turn up again in West Africa.'<sup>2</sup>

Still another instrument resembles closely the civilized xylophone and is made from hollow pieces of wood of different lengths fastened cross-wise to two banana stalks.

**RELIGION.** Theoretically the Baganda are all Christians, but the old forms of daimonism and ancestor-worship persist. There are numerous spirits associated with lightning, rain and other phenomena. Among the Pre-Christian priests, as elsewhere in the world, the cross was a mystic symbol.

The dead are washed with the pulp of banana stems, and placed on a frame in the hut. They are buried before the hut door, and a small structure is reared beside the grave for the purpose of mourning—which ends after one month. Formerly, living persons were buried with the dead to be followers to the spirit world; but this practice has fallen into disuse.

The Baganda distinguish two varieties of doctors: first, those who have a practical knowledge of healing herbs, etc.;

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 647.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 665.



second, the regular *sha* who practice auto-hypnosis and mesmerism. In former times the doctors were confused with and undifferentiated from the priests. Among the primitive therapeutic devices are cupping (which is frequently nothing but the sucking of the spot where pain is located), massage, and the sweat bath.

The Baganda have an extensive mythology, and many stories about animals and spirits, of the typically African type. But Christianity is said to have been established pretty strongly, and the religious system to be changing and progressive.

**REGULATIVE ORGANIZATION.** The government is the regular central African despotism, and has been very bloody. There is great respect for law and order; in fact the people are somewhat slavish. It is said that this regime engenders politeness, and that the Baganda are the politest race in Africa. If it is true that the freest nation is the rudest, then, perhaps, the politeness of the Baganda is an indication of their oppression at the hands of their rulers.

## CHAPTER V.

### BANTU—CONGO PEOPLES.

It is not to be understood that all the rest of the Bantus are on so high a plane as the Zulu and Baganda. In the center and west of Africa they are much less developed in culture. There is no great difference in physique, but the distinctions are like in the grade of civilization attained. We shall now briefly survey the main features of the central and west African societies.

These peoples occupy the valley of the Congo and while the different tribes possess many distinctive local customs yet the general type of civilization is the same throughout. The population of this region is variously estimated at from 14,000,000 to 30,000,000.

**ENVIRONMENT.** The Congo is the largest river of Africa and is only exceeded in size, among the rivers of the world, by the Amazon. This enormous river has a length of 3,000 miles, a width, in places, of 8 miles, and a drainage area of 1,425,000 square miles. This huge territory includes the equatorial basin of central Africa and much of the surrounding plateaus.

Situated as it is in the tropics, the valley of the Congo is made up chiefly of dense jungle-like primeval forests, but there is some prairie or grass land. The climate is equatorial, the rainfall copious, and the vegetation luxuriant to the point of impenetrability. Swamps, almost impassable, cover large areas along the river and through the interior of the country.

**PHYSIQUE.** The physique of the Congo peoples is of the negro type (see Ch. on negro) varying somewhat, but on the whole not so good as that of the Zulu and the Baganda.

**CHARACTER AND ABILITY.** "The native can love and he can hate; but he is neither a good lover nor a strong hater. His affections are neither steady nor permanent. He will, however, remember a wrong committed against him much longer than a good deed done to help him. He is moved more by fear of pain, by loss of material profit, and by public opinion than swayed by principles and arguments. He will float with the stream rather than continually struggle against it; but at the same time he can obstinately and doggedly follow a course that will result in physical pain, financial loss, and ridicule if he is once persuaded that his ultimate interests lie in that direction.

"He is not lacking in gratitude, but he is afraid of displaying it lest a favour be asked of him in return. When you visit him he will remind you of the fact that you mended his broken leg or cured his disease, not to make it the basis of a generous act towards you, but rather as a plea to procure something extra out of you by awakening your further interest in him.

"In some districts you will find he is more a liar than a thief, and if you investigate you will discover that the fines imposed for thieving are such as to deter him from following his inclination to steal. In other districts, where the native laws are more lax, he will excel both in thieving and lying, but he will readily admit they are vices worthy of stringent punishment, and will express his regret that the thief stole either from you or from himself, and at the same time he will be doing his best to rob you."<sup>1</sup>

"He is prouder than Lucifer is reputed to be, and will resent the smallest slight put upon his so-called dignity. In a fit of overweening vanity he will sacrifice everything he possesses, and destroy all his future prospects to satisfy the pride of the moment. His family may be insignificant, his town paltry, himself small and dirty, but touch his pride and he will act as though he were *un grand seigneur*. He himself must be the judge of what hurts his pride, not you. He has his own code of honour and etiquette, difficult at times for you to understand, hence you wonder at some of the exhibitions of his pride.

"His memory is well trained, and his powers of observation keen and minute; his ability to adapt himself to his surroundings is wonderful, and imitative faculties are remarkable; but he lacks power of mental concentration and logical thought. His physical powers are highly developed—he will carry a load, from 70 lbs. to 80 lbs., up and down hill and across broken country, or paddle a heavy canoe hour after hour, without exhibiting much fatigue; but he cannot, or will not, follow a line of thought, metaphorically speaking, for twenty yards. His reasoning and reflective faculties are stunted, undeveloped, for they have been exercised upon nothing more profound than the very alphabet of existence. He knows that two and two make four—that certain results follow certain causes, but that a series of causes will produce a series of results complicated and wide-spreading in their effect he cannot grasp. He has no power of deduction, and little or no faculty for producing a well-developed plot or involved plan."<sup>2</sup>

"He has a wonderful power of imitation, but he lacks invention and initiative; but this lack is undoubtedly due to suppression of the inventive faculty. For generations it has been the custom to charge with witchcraft anyone who has commenced a new industry or discovered a new article of barter. The making of anything out of the ordinary has brought on the maker a charge of witchcraft that again and again has resulted in death by the ordeal. To know more than others, to be more skilful than others, more energetic, more acute in business, more smart in dress, has often caused a charge of witchcraft and death. Therefore, the native to save his life and live in peace has smothered his inventive faculty, and all spirit of enterprise has been driven out of him."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Weeks, "Among the Congo Cannibals," pp. 175-176.

<sup>2</sup> Weeks, pp. 176-177.

<sup>3</sup> Weeks, pp. 177-178.

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** These people may be roughly divided into three groups: plain, forest, and riverine tribes. With the exception of a very few along the river, all are agriculturists. The chief things raised are the banana, plantains, sweet potatoes and the cassava root, which, when soaked, pounded, rolled in banana leaves and boiled, forms the staple food of most of the Congo tribes. They also cultivate maize, seseine and tobacco, but these are by no means so wide spread or important as the above mentioned products.

This work of agriculture is carried on largely by the women. Little girls are taken out at an early age to the farms, which are situated on the outskirts of the villages, and there taught how to plant, hoe and gather the crops. They are instructed in the best sort of soil to use, and when it is unprofitable to plant an old farm, and better to start a new one.

The domesticated animals are the goats, sheep and poultry; the latter being fairly common amongst all of these peoples. But the people do not depend entirely upon their own animals for meat. On the Lower Congo such animals as the antelopes, bush-pigs, palm-rats, gazelles, etc., and on the upper branches of the river, the hippopotami, elephants and lions are hunted.

One favorite method of hunting on the plains is to set the grass on fire once a year, and, as the animals rush by in terror, to kill them. The result of this wholesale slaughter has been that the amount of game has greatly decreased. Where the larger game is hunted, before an expedition takes place the medicine-man is called in to perform certain rites so that the hunt might be successful. It is thought that those spirits of the dead who inhabit the forests have the power to turn the animals aside from the traps and hence the medicine-man is expected to prevent this catastrophe. The natives are not very good trackers but depend more on the animals running into the trap or noose than in hunting them down and then killing them.

"For hippopotami, elephants and antelopes spring traps are placed across their tracks. These traps are made by putting two stout uprights about four feet apart, one on either side of the track; then a stout cross-piece is tied at about twelve feet from the ground. To the middle of this cross-piece and right over the track is fixed a heavy log of wood; and into the downward end of the log is placed a strong, sharp, heavy spear or prong. The log is so arranged that when the string which stretches across the path is touched by the passing animal, down comes the log, and four times out of six the spear enters the body of the beast. I once saw the body of a man who, while running in the forest, had inadvertently touched the spring of one of these traps. The spear caught him in the back of the neck, passed through his body, and came out between his legs. Such traps were called *mbonga*. Occasionally pit traps are made, but it is seldom that anything is found in them."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Weeks, p. 234.

These pit traps have at the bottom of them sharpened sticks and iron prongs. Over the hole branches and leaves are placed, and the rapid growth of the jungle soon makes these invisible. When elephants are being hunted the holes are made narrow at the bottom and wider at the top so that the animal in falling in gets his foot stuck in such a way that he is unable to remove it. Many unsuspecting natives lose their lives in these traps, for the sides are so steep that it is almost impossible to climb out, especially should he be alone and injured by the spikes at the bottom, he will in all probability die a lingering death.

"In hunting the larger bush animals, and also crocodiles, the spear is the most common weapon, and this is hurled with great precision and swiftness. But in hunting smaller game, as the small antelopes, coypus or palm-rats, bush-pigs, and gazelle-like animals, long string nets are employed. These nets are placed in a semi-circle near where the animal is supposed to be, and then the hunters carefully beat the bush, driving the game before them into the net. Most of the hunting spears are light, with a small blade and thin shaft, and some have barbs along either side of the blade."<sup>1</sup>

Fishing along the rivers is carried on by various methods. Torches are used at night and when the fish rise to the surface a spear is hurled. During high water, dams are built by the side of the river, so that when it recedes, the fish will be left behind these. Traps and nets of various ingenious kinds are also used.

Of the smaller animals grasshoppers and rats are great delicacies. "After the rainy season, when the long grass is burnt, the rat season commences. They are caught in long, narrow, basket-work traps, which are cylindrical in shape, and placed in such positions that when the grass is set alight, the rats will run into the traps, which are too narrow for them to turn around in. They are then killed, skewered and broiled."<sup>2</sup>

"The evening meal is practically the only meal of the day, and every effort is made to render it as tasty as possible with the limited ingredients at the disposal of the woman cook. Cassava figures as the principal article in every *menu*; and for this meal it is commonly prepared by soaking it for three days, and then, after peeling, coring, and dividing it into quarters, it is steamed, and comes out looking white and appetizing. Either fish, or meat when procurable, is stewed in a small saucepan or roasted over the fire, or wrapped in leaves and covered with red-hot embers; but if there is neither fish nor meat, then a sauce of pounded leaves, red peppers and palm-oil is concocted, and the whole is washed down with gulps of water. They prefer to keep sugar-cane wine for their drinking-bouts and for their cannibal feasts; the latter, in their view, demanding something better than water.

<sup>1</sup> Weeks, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> Ward, "Five Years with the Congo Cannibals," p. 60.

"The food is served first to the elders (male), and if visitors are present they take precedence according to their age. As a rule the members of a family are polite to one another, and any departure from the usual forms of courtesy is regarded with disapprobation by the other members of the family. Guests are treated with hospitality, and are protected by the family they are visiting, and I never knew a guest come to harm during a visit. Men and women do not eat together, as it is accounted immodest and indecent for a woman to eat with a man; and it is *infra dig.* for a man to partake of his food with a woman. They eat by themselves at some little distance, and usually out of sight and hearing of the men."<sup>1</sup>

Practically all the Congo peoples are, or rather were up to a short time ago, cannibals. They eat human flesh because they like it, not because they expect to get any spiritual help by eating the dead. Slain enemies, friends sick unto death, slaves, or people brought in from other tribes for the purpose are eaten, and sometimes families exchange corpses.

**HOUSES AND VILLAGES.** The houses are rectangular in shape, made from bamboo or other woods, with walls and roof made of palm-braid thatch.

"A village may have from twenty to five hundred huts in it, and even more. The rows of houses are generally built in parallel lines to the river; and a head-man possesses one or more lines, according to the size of his family or clan. He may have many wives, slaves and their wives, 'pawns,' and dependents, and consequently own several rows of houses; or he may be the eldest of several brothers who, with their wives, slaves, etc., jointly own several rows of dwellings. The former head-man is a greater man than the latter, he has more prestige in the town, and has greater influence in its palavers, for such a man is the head of a powerful family, each unit of which may number more than the brothers, their wives and slaves."<sup>2</sup>

**INDUSTRIAL LIFE.** The Congo natives are a great trading peoples—the best in Africa—carrying their produce miles either on their heads or in their canoes to some neighboring markets. If there are neither markets or market-places a person having anything to sell walks through the town calling out its name. "Sometimes a person catches a fish that is taboo to him, and he will hawk it through the town to try to exchange it for another that he can eat."<sup>3</sup>

Trading methods here as elsewhere among primitive people are in the nature of haggling. There are neutral market places, which are the scene of their vociferous and forensic exchange operations.

Iron hoes and brass rods are the currency; the latter being the more common on the upper Congo. Weeks describes this

<sup>1</sup> Weeks, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Weeks, pp. 115–116.

<sup>3</sup> Weeks, p. 114.

form of money used, while he was there, as follows: "A brass rod at that time was 15 inches long and not quite so thick as a slate pencil. Everything had its price in brass rods—one egg = one brass rod; a fowl = ten brass rods; two yards of cloth = twenty brass rods; a male slave = 600 brass rods; and a female slave = 2,500 brass rods. The brass wire for these rods was originally melted down for their brass ornaments—anklets, necklaces, armlets, leg rings, hafts of spears, paddles, and handles of knives, etc. It was using the brass for this purpose that first gave it any real value to them; and then they exchanged certain lengths of the brass wire at a fixed price—so many fathoms for a goat, etc., and gradually the lengths of brass wire became the medium of exchange, the unit of value, the currency of the country. In 1890 the brass rods still retained their value not so much as a medium of barter, although they were convenient for that purpose, but as the metal from which they made their most popular ornaments. It is quite possible that the rods changed hands in fathom lengths and those who came into possession of these lengths, each cut off a little piece to procure a bit of brass for nothing, and hence the length was gradually shortened, until in 1890 it was 15 inches. The process of shortening continued, and in 1905 the standard length was only 11 inches. In Bolobo it was about 9½ inches, and on the Lower Congo, where brass wire was used long before it filtered through to the tribes on the Upper Congo, it was from four to five inches only in 1905. Of course, with the shortening of the rod, a larger number was given for the article to be purchased. Every white man imported his brass wire in coils, and cut the rod to the length used in the district where he resided. Brass rods are now almost a drug in the market, for not only have they been poured into the country in a steady stream for the last thirty years, but the custom of melting down brass for the manufacture of ornaments has been slowly dying out during the last ten years. They desire other things than simply ornaments now."<sup>1</sup>

"In their business transactions credit is frequently given, and for such credit no interest is expected. To recover a debt a creditor first duns the debtor until he is tired, then he breaks the pots and saucepans, and anything he finds outside the debtor's house, and finishes by telling him that on a certain day he will call again for the money. If the debtor then fails to pay, the creditor will collect a few of his friends, and together they will go and lie in ambush near the farms until a wife of the debtor comes along, when they will pounce upon her and take her to their town. The woman will kick, struggle and scream for the sake of appearances, but she knows that she will be lightly tied and well treated.

"The debtor will hear of the capture of his wife, and, supposing he owes 1,000 brass rods, he will collect the money as quickly as possible, and take it with 500 extra rods, which he will now have to pay to his creditor to compensate him and his friends for the

<sup>1</sup> Weeks, pp. 39-40.

trouble of tying up the woman and the cost of feeding her. As a woman is worth nearly 3,000 rods, it pays the debtor to redeem his property by paying his debt and the sum demanded for expenses.”<sup>1</sup>

“From his very boyhood the Boloki was a keen trader. He accompanied his father on all trading journeys as soon as he was able to beat time with a stick in the bows of the canoe, or handle a paddle. In the village he learned the value of different articles, and nothing delighted him more than exchanging what he did not want for something that he needed. While his father was bartering he would eagerly listen, and thus learn how to praise his own goods, and disparage in depreciatory terms the articles which he desired to purchase, so as to lower their prices. Before an article could be exchanged with profit to himself he had many things to learn—the first cost of the article, the time spent in hawking it, the payment and keep of those who helped to paddle him from place to place in search of a buyer—or he would find himself poorer at the end of his trading expedition than he was at the beginning. This was no small part of the lad’s education.”<sup>2</sup>

**MANUFACTURING.** Pottery was made not on a wheel but rather “built up on a base by rolling the clay between the palms of the hands into long pencils about the size of a finger, and then welding the strip to the base and flattening it out with the fingers as they worked it around the pot.”<sup>3</sup>

“In baking their pottery no kilns were used, but firewood was laid carefully on the ground, and the pots arranged on the top, and then small firewood, twigs, etc., were thrown over the whole pile and the fire lighted.”<sup>4</sup>

Iron ore was smelted in native crucibles. “The furnace was a hole about 18 inches deep, about 15 inches in diameter at the top, and 8 to 10 inches at the bottom. Charcoal made from hard woods was the heating medium. The smelting pot with the ore was put in the middle of the furnace, and the blast was furnished by native bellows and conducted to the heart of the furnace by a funnel-shaped tube of burnt clay. The bellows were cut out of a solid block of wood. There were two holes, each from 8 to 12 inches in diameter, which opened below into a common wooden tube which fitted into the above-mentioned clay funnel. Over each of the holes a soft skin was securely tied, and to the centre of each skin was fixed a stick about 3 feet, 6 inches long. The operator worked the sticks up and down alternately, and the more vigorously he worked the more powerful the blast.

“The native blacksmith made hoes and axes; knives of various shapes and sizes; spear-heads of different kinds, barbed for fishing-spears, small-bladed ones for fighting, or broad-bladed fancy spears for purposes of show when visiting friends and neigh-

<sup>1</sup> Weeks, pp. 114–115.

<sup>2</sup> Weeks, p. 143.

<sup>3</sup> Weeks, p. 87.

<sup>4</sup> Weeks, p. 88.



bours. He also fashioned large hooks for catching crocodiles, the razors for shaving the head or face, lances for killing hippopotami, knives for household use, gouges and chisels for canoe-making, and piercers for mat-making. Unfortunately the introduction of European knives, hoes and axes has ruined this native industry."<sup>1</sup>

"The social position of a smith among the natives was very high, and he was regarded with as much respect as a professional man is in Europe. The natives thought that the smith was not only wise and skilful, but that he practised witchcraft in order to perform his work properly. No one was allowed to step over a smith's furnace, nor blow it with his mouth, nor spit into it, as either of these actions would pollute the fire, and thus cause bad workmanship. Any person polluting the fire would have to compensate the smith by the payment of a heavy fine. A smith taught his son or his nephew the trade, but would not take an apprentice on any consideration. He was always known by the name of his trade, and was consequently called *motuli* = the one who *tula*, or works in iron."<sup>2</sup>

**MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY.** Girls are frequently betrothed at a very early age, and payments pass from the man, who may be 40 years old, to the parents of the girl before she is old enough to give her consent. "When the girl arrives at a suitable age, and sometimes even before puberty, she is taken by her parents, together with some sugar-cane wine, to her husband, and handed over to him, and on the man giving the parents a present the transaction is completed."<sup>3</sup>

When a free man marries a free woman the price which he has to pay her parents consists of two male and two female slaves, brass rods or barter goods will not be taken in lieu of them.

"During the time the man is collecting the marriage money he will build a house, if he does not already possess one, and the girl, under the supervision of her mother, will prepare a farm. After the ceremony described above is over, the girl borrows all the finery she can of her female friends, decorates herself with palm-oil and camwood powder, and for two or three weeks walks about the town with her husband—a sign to all that she is now his wife. If the man has already a few wives, they will help to 'dress her' by the loan of their own trinkets, and will lead her about the town as a proof that she is now a fellow-wife and belongs to their husband."<sup>4</sup>

A man may marry as many free women as he can pay for, but to each he must give a house, and they all have equal rights. Besides these he may possess numerous female slaves, but should he be unable to buy any of these, he can hire them for a time.

"When a free woman does not want to marry the man who is

<sup>1</sup> Weeks, pp. 88–89.

<sup>2</sup> Weeks, pp. 90–91.

<sup>3</sup> Weeks, p. 122.

<sup>4</sup> Weeks, p. 124.

trying to arrange for her, she will tell him frankly that if he persists in marrying her, she will run away from him. But if, in spite of this threat, he completes the arrangements, then a few days after the marriage she will escape to a neighbouring town and put herself under the protection of the chief by tearing his cloth. The chief then gives the husband notice of what has happened, and before he can claim his wife he has to pay the chief 600 brass rods = 39S. as compensation for his torn cloth. If the husband does not then permit her to marry the man she wants, she runs away again and again, and every time she runs it will cost her husband 600 brass rods. A sensible man will take warning by the first threat, and will not complete the marriage.”<sup>1</sup>

A man is not allowed to have anything to do with his mother-in-law, in fact, if he hears that she is coming he will run in the opposite direction and hide.

On the Lower Congo the women desire to have children but on the upper stretches of the river small families are the rule. “This may be accounted for by the fact that on the Lower Congo the law of mother-right is in full force, and consequently all the children belong to the mother and her family; while on the Upper Congo father-right is the general custom, and the children belonging to the father, the mother has no particular interest in them.

“The beliefs of a tribe considerably affect their point of view, and this is seen in nothing more emphatically than in their beliefs about child-bearing. On the Lower Congo a non-child-bearing woman is the butt of the town’s ridicule, she is sneered at, pointed at by all the other women, and is the object of their scorn. She feels degraded in the eyes of all, and, however much she may blame her husband, or may try to prove that she is bewitched, yet her shame is bitterly felt and resented. She has failed ignominiously in her one paramount duty to her family. Her sterility is the constant theme of her husband’s bickerings; and when everything else fails to quiet her or stop her nagging tongue, he has only to hint at this abnormal disability and she is choked with chagrin and almost ready to commit suicide.”<sup>2</sup>

There are cases on record where a man had “eight wives, and he had five children by one and none by the others; another had ten wives and no children; another had twenty-three wives and only one child; another twenty-five wives and three children only; another who had eight wives had three children.”<sup>3</sup>

**SELF-GRATIFICATION.** In this region there is a great deal of painting and scarring of the body, of tooth-filing and lip-plugging. Heavy rings are frequently worn on the limbs, the wearer being sometimes almost unable to walk by reason of the weight of his finery. Umbrellas are a mark of dignity. What native clothing is worn is chiefly of bark. Naturally these people are very fond of European clothing and trinkets.

<sup>1</sup> Weeks, p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> Weeks, p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> Weeks, p. 135.

"It is customary among the Upper Congo people to stamp their features and persons, by means of cicatrization, with various designs, differing according to the tribe. About the age of four the operation is first commenced, the skin of the face being gashed in conformity with the tribal pattern; after some months have elapsed, so that the wounds may be completely healed, they are re-cut, and each gash is filled with redwood powder, produced from crushed camwood, of which the forest yields a plentiful supply. After frequent repetitions of this barbarous mutilation, the skin and flesh become hardened and protrude in lumps, between the incisions."<sup>1</sup>

"The natives are fond of water, and bathe frequently during a hot day; and children are bathed regularly twice a day. A mother takes her infant to the river and, gripping it tightly just under the right armpit, she dips it beneath the water. And, after holding it there many moments, she will lift it out, and just as it regains its breath to start crying, down it will go again. This is repeated about a dozen times, and then rubbing the superfluous water with the palm of her hand, she holds it out in the sun for a few moments to dry. Riverine people can remain under the water for a long time while attending their fish-nets, and this habit they have gained from those infantile experiences, when it was either holding the breath, or drinking a quantity of dirty river water."<sup>2</sup>

**RELIGION.** The religion of the Congo tribes is difficult to define. Belief in a Supreme Being is vague but universal, but as this Being is good, or at least neutral, he is disregarded. It is believed by the natives that, after having performed his creative works, he withdrew to a great distance; that "He has now little or no concern in mundane affairs; and apparently no power over spirits and no control over the lives of men, either to protect them from malignant spirits or to help them by averting danger. They also consider the Supreme Being (*Nzambi*) as being so good and kind that there is no need to appease Him by rites, ceremonies or sacrifices."<sup>3</sup>

The native applies himself to the propitiation and coercion, by magical means, of the countless malignant spirits with which he imagines himself to be surrounded, and which are constantly on the watch to catch him unawares.

Every person has a fetish which is carried around most of the time. If a man is ill he goes to the medicine man and obtains a special fetish to help his complaint.

"On the Lower Congo the native offers periodic sacrifices to his fetish to keep it in a good humour, otherwise through sulkiness it may refuse to help him; or he returns it to a medicine man to renew its energies when it proves too weak for his purpose; he explodes gunpowder around it to arouse it to proper alertness

<sup>1</sup> Ward, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> Weeks, p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> Weeks, p. 247.

that it may attend to its owner's affairs; or he beats it to make it subservient to his wishes, but he never worships it, nor does he ever pay homage to it."<sup>1</sup>

The soul of man is supposed to leave the body during sleep, in a trance, and at death. The mouths and nostrils of the recently dead are plugged and tied, for the people think that the soul of a dying man escapes through the mouth and nose, and hence they are tied to keep the spirit as long as possible.

They also conceive of the soul of a person as in his shadow, reflection in the water or a mirror, and in a photograph.

When a person dies the cause is laid to one of three things, either an act of the Supreme Being, or by another's witchcraft, or by his own witchcraft. The medicine man or witch-doctor is called in to determine which of the three is responsible. If some one else has caused the death, the doctor points out the man or woman supposed to be guilty, and death speedily follows.

Bodies, after being painted and decorated with shells, etc., are buried in the ground, if they are not eaten. Usually one or more of the wives of a man are killed at the grave and for a big chief as many as three hundred victims have been slain. It was partly to provide such victims that the brisk slave trade was kept up. Bodies have been frequently disinterred for cannibalistic purposes.

**REGULATIVE SYSTEM.** There is a division of classes, as is natural where migration and subjugation are the order of the day: an aristocracy and slaves at the bottom. Central Africa has been the great theatre of the slave trade, and even before the coming of the Arabs and Portuguese, there was a good deal of it, for slaves were means of power and a money value. However, the native slavery was very mild as compared with the system after the coming of the foreigner. The man-hunts, continued under Arab and European influence, produced general devastation.

The general political situation is one of disintegration. The people are all split up into tribes, and there are numerous petty premises, each with his military establishment. There exists the "normal anarchy of African miniature republics." The chief is *primus inter pares*, and is so much the greater if he is also a witch-doctor. Empires grow under capable chiefs; then these chiefs put their relatives in charge of provinces, and presently the empire breaks up.

<sup>1</sup> Weeks, p. 254.

## CHAPTER VI.

### NEGROES OF THE WEST CENTRAL COAST.

The word Negro comes from the Latin, *Niger*, meaning black, and is used to distinguish the distinctly dark skinned peoples as opposed to the fair, yellow and brown varieties of mankind. In its broadest sense it applies to all the dark races of Africa, Australia, and the islands of the Pacific, but it is most convenient to refer to the peoples of these zones as Negroids and to reserve the term Negro for those tribes which exhibit in the most marked degree the typical characteristics of this variety.

These peoples are found in Africa and occupy part of the territory south of the Sahara desert and north of the Bantu group, which contains their nearest relatives. "The relation of the yellowish-brown Bushman and Hottentot peoples of the southern extremity of Africa to the negro is uncertain; they possess certain negroid characters, the tightly curled hair, the broad nose, the tendency towards prognathism; but their color and a number of psychological and cultural differences would seem to show that the relation is not close."<sup>1</sup>

**GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE.** This territory occupied by the negro is lower than other portions of Africa, averaging only about 2,000 feet and possessing no real mountain ranges. Along the Guinea, Gold, Slave, and Ivory Coasts, that region with which this chapter is to deal, there are very deep indentations made by lagoons with heavily wooded shores.

"The amount of vegetation in Africa varies generally according to distance from the equator. The equatorial region is a dense forest resulting from the copious rains, while towards the north and south the amount of rain diminishes and finally ceases almost altogether, giving rise to wide stretches of desert. Only differences of elevation and proximity to the sea modify this general law."<sup>2</sup> Along the western coast, and inland near the equator, the jungle is so dense that not only the sun is obscured but also the air is excluded so that while the tops of trees are rustling in the breeze the people below are gasping for breath.

The rainy season is from June to October but on the Guinea coast the rain falls from 200 to 250 days in the year. This makes a large number of swamps and stagnant pools which are breeding places for diseases. "Except in a few favored localities the climate of the Sudan is fatal to the European. The

<sup>1</sup> *Encycl. Brit.* under Negro by T. A. Joyce.

<sup>2</sup> J. Dowd, "The Negro Race," p. 68.

high temperature and the humid air, unrelieved by change of seasons, are exceedingly enervating, and nowhere near the coast can one refresh himself with a cool draught of water. At the close of the rainy season, the miasmatic exhalations from the stagnant waters, left everywhere by the subsidence of the rivers, poison the atmosphere and render it injurious and often fatal to both man and beast."<sup>1</sup>

The death rate of whites in this region is enormous. It has been estimated that out of every 1,000 members of the white population 680 succumb to the effects of the heat and disease. The negro, however, is of course adapted to this climate.

**ANIMAL LIFE.** "The animal life of the Sudan comprises the elephant, buffalo, giraffe, hippopotamus, lion, tiger, wolf, ox, sheep, goat, deer, ass, camel, hyena, jackal, panther, wild-cat, lynx, leopard, rhinoceros, wild boar, hare, squirrel, hog, monkey, antelope, etc. The natives claim that there are two species of crocodile, one which man eats, and one which eats man. The number of wild animals available for food is not very great in the neighborhood of the coast, on account of the swampy nature of the country and the dense forests, and the early introduction of the shot-gun which has depleted the region of such animals as it originally contained. Elephants were formerly very abundant along the island seaboard, and in the sixteenth century more ivory came from the Gambia region than from any other part of Africa."<sup>2</sup>

#### **PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CHARACTERS OF NEGRO.**

The negro is tall, has a dolichocephalic skull, prognathous jaw, nose broad and flat, lips full and everted, teeth large. The color of the skin varies from a dark brown to nearly black. The skin has a velvety texture and characteristic odor. The hair is black, tightly curled with a flat cross section and is scanty on face and body. The arm is very long, especially the forearm, so that frequently the tips of fingers will nearly touch the knees. The legs are long with a very small calf and projecting heel.

"Mentally the negro is inferior to the white. The remark of F. Manetta, made after a long study of the negro in America, may be taken as generally true of the whole race: 'the negro children were sharp, intelligent and full of vivacity, but on approaching the adult period a gradual change set in. The intellect seemed to become clouded, animation giving place to a sort of lethargy, briskness yielding to indolence. We must necessarily suppose that the development of the negro and white proceeds on different lines. While with the latter the volume of the brain grows with the expansion of the brainpan, in the former the growth of the brain is on the contrary ar-

<sup>1</sup> Dowd, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Dowd, p. 73.

rested by the premature closing of the cranial sutures and lateral pressure of the frontal bone.' This explanation is reasonable and even probable as a contributing cause; but evidence is lacking on the subject and the arrest or even deterioration in mental development is no doubt very largely due to the fact that after puberty sexual matters take first place in the negro's life and thoughts. At the same time his environment has not been such as would tend to produce in him the restless energy which has led to the progress of the white race; and the easy conditions of tropical life and the fertility of the soil have reduced the struggle for existence to a minimum. But though the mental inferiority of the negro to the white or yellow races is a fact, it has often been exaggerated; the negro is largely the creature of his environment, and it is not fair to judge of his mental capacity by tests taken directly from the environment of the white man, as for instance tests in mental arithmetic; skill in reckoning is necessary to the white race, and it has cultivated this faculty; but it is not necessary to the Negro.

"On the other hand negroes far surpass white men in acuteness of vision, hearing, sense of direction and topography. A native who has once visited a particular locality will rarely fail to recognize it again. For the rest, the mental constitution of the negro is very similar to that of a child, normally good-natured and cheerful, but subject to sudden fits of emotion and passion during which he is capable of performing acts of singular atrocity, impressionable, vain, but often exhibiting in the capacity of servant a dog-like fidelity which has stood the supreme test. Given suitable training, the negro is capable of becoming a craftsman of considerable skill, particularly in metal work, carpentry and carving. The bronze castings by the *cire perdue* process, and the cups and horns of ivory elaborately carved, which were produced by the natives of Guinea after their intercourse with the Portuguese of the 16th century, bear ample witness to this. But the rapid decline and practical evanescence of both industries, when that intercourse was interrupted, shows that the native craftsman was raised for the moment above his normal level by direct foreign inspiration, and was unable to sustain the high quality of his work when that inspiration failed."<sup>1</sup>

The negro is as a rule cruel, having little feelings for the suffering of others and often delighting in the most diabolical tortures. If a man is ill and he has no slaves or wives to help him he is left to die and "the desertion by his parents and friends is not even regarded as a fault." "The most revolting scenes of cruelty and bloodshed," says Ellis, "are regarded by the populace generally with positive pleasure and no sooner is

<sup>1</sup> Encycl. Brit. under Negro, pp 344-345.

the death-drum heard, than an excited mob, eager for the spectacle, rushes to the spot and imbitters the last moments of the victims with taunts and jeers. \* \* \* The executioners to pander to the tastes of the mob or to gratify their own lust for cruelty, practice the most shocking barbarities, blunting their knives to increase the suffering of their victims or cutting pieces of flesh from the neck before striking off the head. In fact, the most refined tortures that human ingenuity can devise are constantly inflicted, death is ever present, and human suffering and human life are alike disregarded. Two Europeans who witnessed an execution in Ashanti reported that the 'murderer with his hands bound behind him, a knife through his cheeks, and two forks piercing his back, was dragged by a rope past our rooms. \* \* \* Commencing at midday, the punishment increased in intensity till eight o'clock, when the poor wretch was gashed all over, his arms cut off, and himself compelled to dance for the amusement of the king before being taken to the place of execution. If he could not or would not dance, lighted torches were applied to his wounds; to escape this excessive torture he made the greatest efforts to move, until the drum was beaten and the head cut off.' <sup>1</sup>

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** The negro is principally an agriculturist, except in those regions where the denseness of the jungle or the impenetrability of the swamps makes artificial planting impossible. The principal crops are yams, bananas, manioc with some maize; but the chief one is the yam. This is a tuber or root resembling the English potato, only very much larger, sometimes being three feet in length. The fields for its planting are prepared by being burned over and the ashes are then turned in to act as fertilizer. The earth is made into little hills into each one of which a yam is placed. During the growing season great care has to be taken to keep the weeds out, for a very short time would suffice to choke out the young plants. At the time of the harvest, every one goes out into the fields to help. The yams are gathered and stored in a house used solely for that purpose on the outskirts of the village. It is usually left open, but in order to protect it from theft, magical charms, obtained from the medicine man, are hung around it. These are so effective that no one will go near the building who does not belong there.

The yam is prepared for eating either by being peeled, cut into slices and boiled in a pot, or by being mashed with other things into a sort of pudding.

Next to agriculture, hunting and fishing are important, and in some few districts cattle-raising is indulged in. While the negro is principally a vegetarian, yet it is not because he prefers to be, but rather because animal food is scarce. Meat is

<sup>1</sup> Ellis, "Tshi Speaking People," pp. 174-175.



regarded as a great delicacy, but even among the cattle-raising peoples it is not plentiful, for the cattle being regarded as currency are seldom killed. But where they will not kill their domestic animals they will kill human beings. This flesh is eaten, not because they expect any magical good will come of it, but rather because the people like it.

The chief drink is the palm wine which is collected from the palm tree as follows: "Every morning and evening the climber ascends this palm, and making with a very sharp knife a small incision in the bark, inserts a bamboo funnel, and hangs up a calabash or gourd into which the sap slowly trickles. In the morning he collects the product of the night, and in the evening that of the day. The method of climbing is very ingenious. Putting around the trunk one end of an elongated hoop of bamboo and basket-work, the climber gets into the other end; it clasps him securely round the waist, and, leaning back, he ascends by working the opposite end of the hoop up the trunk in the series of notches made by the lopping off of the branches as the tree increased in growth, his feet at the same time climbing up from notch to notch. It is poured out into earthen pots or glass demijohns, and diluted with the same quantity of water. Undiluted, it is rather strong and heady. Palm-wine tastes something like cider, and varies considerably, sometimes being quite sweet, while at other times it is almost as bitter as Herefordshire cider. Chiefs, and other people who can afford it, occasionally drink enough of it to become intoxicated."<sup>1</sup>

One of the most important crafts is iron smelting and working. "No negro tribe has been found of which the culture is typical of the stone age; or, indeed which makes any use of stone implements except to crush ore and hammer metal. Even these are rough pieces of stone of convenient size, not shaped in any way by chipping or grinding. Doubtless the richness of the African soil in metal ores rendered the stone age in Africa a period of very short duration."<sup>2</sup> Many of the artisans have formed castes or guilds—for example the smiths.

Other industries include basket work, pottery, and weaving cloth.

In this region there is shown great talent for commerce; one authority says it is the "only force making for culture." There are weekly markets, and every negro village has its broker; also trading prime ministers and trading viceroys are to be found. The articles of trade are the products of the country and the things manufactured by the people. Where the Europeans have entered the country they have brought with them such things as muskets, gunpowder, rum, fabrics, and trinkets which have been exchanged for gold, ivory, palm oil,

<sup>1</sup> C. Partridge, "Cross River Natives," pp. 150-151.

<sup>2</sup> Encycl. Brit. under Negro, p. 345.

and formerly, slaves. "Trading is practised either by direct barter or through the medium of rude forms of currency which vary according to locality. Value is reckoned among the tribes with pastoral tendencies in cattle and goats; among the eastern negroes by hoe-and-spear-blades and salt blocks; in the west by cowries, brass rods, and bronze armlets (manilas)."<sup>1</sup>

"The early writers report that the transportation system consisted of porters, mostly women, who carried goods to and from the markets. Not infrequently a woman supported a baby on her back in addition to her load of merchandise. In thick forests the carriers bore their loads in frames on their backs while with a knife in hand they cut their way through the underbrush. Rich people sometimes traveled in hammocks borne by their slaves. Dahoman princes now and then rode on horseback, but the horse was regarded as a rare and strange beast and always two slaves had to walk beside the rider to hold him on. The same methods of transportation exist at the present time with the addition of a few railroads lately constructed by Europeans. One of these roads runs from the Dahoman Coast to the middle course of the Niger and another from Lagos to Rabba on the Niger. Of course, canoe navigation is common on all the bays and rivers, but the boats made and used by the natives are generally of inferior workmanship."<sup>2</sup>

**SLAVERY.** "Slavery in this zone, as everywhere else in the Sudan, has existed from time immemorial and owes its origin to native economic and political conditions. As the men do not work it is evident that they do not need helpers or slaves. On the other hand as all of the work falls upon the women, it is evident that if slave labor is used at all it must be to help them. The demand for labor is partly supplied by the addition of several wives to each household. Now, as each man has several wives it would seem that whatever work is necessary for the support of a family could be done by the combined labor of the wives, but not so. The wives have a disposition to shirk their work, especially when they are used as porters to carry goods to and from the markets, and therefore it becomes necessary to seek other laborers. But where is the supply to come from? Land being free and capital a superfluity, every man can make an easy living and need not under any circumstances ask another man to support him. Hence no one will voluntarily work for another, and the only way that laborers can be obtained is by coercion, i. e., by forcing them to work as slaves. Here we find the explanation of slavery. Primarily it arises from the indisposition of people to work for themselves, and secondarily, from their inability to get others to work for them except by force."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Encycl. Brit., p. 345.

<sup>2</sup> Dowd, p. 97.

<sup>3</sup> Dowd, p. 98.

“Slaves were obtained by sale of debtors and criminals and by kidnapping and raiding. \* \* \* Not only is the labor of slaves light but it is less painful than the labor of the serving class among civilized people. Slaves can hunt, fish, dance and enjoy all of the excitements common to free men. They work only with irregularity and the demands upon their attention are only intermittent. Often slaves are left to do as they please provided they lodge at home, feed themselves and give to their master a fixed sum per week.”<sup>1</sup> “They are considered members of the family, they can acquire and inherit property, they can own slaves themselves and not infrequently purchase their freedom by buying other slaves to take their places. Prior to the European intervention, idle, vicious and mutinous slaves were punished by flogging and imprisonment, but no slave-owner could take the life of his slave, and it was seldom that a slave ran away.”<sup>2</sup>

However, where there are too many slaves to carry on the limited amount of economic life, the superfluous ones are kept for food. As a rule all of a man's slaves are killed on his grave. It was from this district that the slaves brought to the United States were captured.

**HOUSES AND VILLAGES.** The houses are either rectangular or round but in both cases there is only one family in each house. They are built around an open space with the fronts facing in, while the backs form the outer wall of the enclosure. When there are too few houses for this purpose, the gaps between them are filled in with high stakes. There are no windows in the back walls.

A village may consist of a great many of these compounds, each one of which is occupied by a man, his family and relations. If the village is in a war-like district, it is surrounded by a high stockade which has only one entrance to it, and this very narrow.

The rectangular houses have a solid foundation of dried mud a yard high upon which is erected a light frame work of wood. The roof is made from palm branches woven into mats. The round houses, which are the more primitive, have a wall made of mud and small stones and a conical thatched roof which will throw off the heavy tropical showers. Every town has an open space which is used by the community for gatherings and public meetings, and here is erected the temple or shrine to the local deity.

**MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY.** There are two ways for a man to obtain a wife; he may capture her, or he may purchase her by means of gifts to her parents. As a rule girls are cheap, for they are more plentiful than men and are not re-

<sup>1</sup> Dowd, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Ellis, “Ewe Speaking People,” pp. 219-220.

garded as an especial asset to a family. In some places the purchase price consists of a few ornaments to the girl. "In Dahomi it used to be the custom for the men to purchase their wives from the king, who was supposed to own everything in the empire, including the women. He kept up his supply by frequent raids upon neighboring villages. In many cases children are betrothed at five or six years of age, and sometimes before they are born. In either event the purchaser pays to the girl's parents a part of the price in advance, and the balance when the girl reaches the age of puberty. If a betrothed girl dies, the family must substitute another. Girls who reach the marriageable age without being betrothed, make their debut into society by painting their faces and arms, decking themselves with jewels and finery, and with a broom in their hands to drive away evil spirits, exhibit themselves in the streets. They thus announce that they are ready to receive bids. Marriage is a somewhat commercial or animal affair in which there is little admixture of romance. A suitor does not say, 'I love this girl,' but 'I want her.' Being a mere chattel the girl has no choice in the selection of her husband. A female is always treated as property; first she is the property of her parents, then of her husband (although in some cases a wife may own property distinct from that of her husband's) and later of her inheritor. In some districts it is usual just before the marriage for women to be immured in huts for the purpose of undergoing a fattening process. In a majority of cases marriages are celebrated by feasting and dancing, but sometimes they occur without any kind of ceremony. Girls marry as soon as they reach the age of puberty, become mothers at the age of thirteen or fourteen, and grandmothers at the age of thirty-five."<sup>1</sup>

Polygamy prevails; in fact a man's head wife urges him to take more wives so that the work will be lighter for each one. Each wife has a separate hut.

Most of the tribes are very lax about morality; a girl may choose whom she pleases before she is married, and although she may be engaged, her future husband will not try to restrain her. Even after marriage there is little restraint placed upon the sexes.

"The burden of supporting the family devolves almost exclusively upon the women. With two or three wives or slaves, a man can live from year to year in tolerable ease and luxury. His women bring food for him from the plantain groves, sometimes bearing on their backs a hundred weight of fruit. They bring fire-wood from the forest and water from the nearest streams. In so far as the man is concerned, the only burden of supporting a family consists in the original expenses of the

<sup>1</sup> Dowd, pp. 133-134.

wedding. A clear sense of the obligation to support a wife does not arise anywhere until property begins to be held as a unit by the father, as it is among pastoral people, and to be transmitted without division in the male line."<sup>1</sup>

Children are regarded as a blessing, not from any idea of affection but rather as another person who will work. A mother will tend her child until it is old enough to shift for itself and then she pays little more attention to it. Parents will frequently sell their children for slaves if they can get a good price for them. Twins are regarded with abhorrence, and a woman who brings forth more than one child at a birth is regarded as no better than an animal. It is thought that an evil spirit is the father of one of them, and hence either one or both are frequently destroyed.

**SELF-GRATIFICATION.** The original dress of this region was a cloth of woven grass around the waist, but since the people have been in contact with Europeans the styles have changed. Many of the people now wear colored cotton dresses which reach from the waist to the knees and over the shoulder a mantle of some stuff. Nothing delights a native more than to rig himself out in the east off finery of a foreigner. The men have a special fondness for long white women's stockings, wearing many pairs one over another, however hot the weather. One Ashanti king is described as wearing a brown velvet coat, white satin trousers, white linen shirt, black beaver hat with a band of silver lace, and a spotted silk muslin sash.

The people also put on the body as many ornaments as possible, and the members of the royal family simply load their necks, shoulders, breasts, wrists, and ankles with gold trinkets. The body is frequently painted, especially on festival occasions or for religious reasons. During a period of mourning a woman will draw large white circles around her eyes, and before she is married her body is covered with red paint.

The negroes are all fond of music and are quick to pick up new tunes. The boatmen sing all day when they are paddling keeping time to the music with their paddles; the women sing while pounding grain, and the farmer while working on his farm. The music is a sort of monotonous chant with a few phrases over and over again.

**RELIGION.** The basis of the religion of the negro is animism. He conceives of a soul in everything, thus giving him an explanation for all phenomena. He himself has two principal souls or spirits, one of which wanders during dreams, the other remains with the body.<sup>2</sup> At death the body spirit goes to the next world but the dream spirit, *kra*, may be reborn in other human beings or in animals.

<sup>1</sup> Dowd, pp. 139-140.

<sup>2</sup> Ellis, "Ewe Speaking People," p. 102.

A person's kra escapes through the mouth of a sleeper and if the mouth is left open a strange kra may enter and take up its abode there, thus causing much trouble. If a man is awakened suddenly his kra may be away so that the man becomes ill. The witch doctor is called in and he gets a new one for the man. In day time the kra will follow the man around in the form of a shadow and so people will avoid walking on the shady side of the street for fear of losing their shadow and hence their kra. Alligators will sometimes pull a man into the river by seizing his shadow, and "murders are sometimes committed by secretly driving a nail or knife into a man's shadow, and so on, but if the murderer be caught red-handed at it, he or she would be forthwith killed."<sup>1</sup>

If a man wakes up in the morning feeling tired he says that his dream-soul has been out fighting and has been bruised; and if he wakes up in a fright, he jumps up and fires off his gun to scare away the devils who have been chasing his soul home. It is possible to injure the dream-soul of another man by setting a trap for it containing things which the dream-soul enjoys. Around the trap are put knives, if it is only desired to injure the dream-soul, but fish hooks if it is to be caught.

"The reason for catching dream-souls with hooks is usually a low mercenary one. You see, many patients insist on having their own dream-soul put back into them—they don't want a substitute from the doctor's store—so of course the soul has to be bought from the witch who has got it. Sometimes, however, the witch is the hireling of some one intent on injuring a particular person and keen on capturing the soul for this purpose, though too frightened to kill his enemy outright. So the soul is not only caught and kept, but tortured, hung up over the canoe fire and so on, and thus, even if the patient has another dream-soul put in, so long as his original soul is in the hands of a torturer, he is uncomfortable."<sup>2</sup>

Some of the negro tribes do not limit these dual souls to man but consider that plants have them. When the plant dies one soul goes to the land of the dead to form a plant there and the kra is reborn in the seed which forms the new plant.

All these nature spirits take an active part in man's economic, social, and political life and hence there is a constant need of so propitiating them that they will deal kindly with him. Before any hunting or fishing expedition takes place the spirits must be invoked and sacrifices made, otherwise there will be little success.

In every community one of the most important individuals is the Fetish Man. In those districts where there are definite gods the Fetish Man becomes a priest devoted to the service of

<sup>1</sup> Miss Kingsley, "West African Studies," p. 208. (London 1899.)

<sup>2</sup> Kingsley, "West African Studies," p. 206.

one god and incidentally with minor spirits; the other gods of the community are taken care of by other priests. Where the gods are less defined the Fetish Man deals with them together and also takes charge of the spirits. If the gods are of little importance, the Fetish Man takes charge of the spirits assisted by one strong spirit with whom he has come in contact.<sup>1</sup>

"The priest's office may in some cases be hereditary, but it is not uniformly so, for the children of Fetish Men sometimes refuse to devote themselves to the pursuits of their parents and engage in other occupations. Any one may enter the office after suitable training, and parents who desire that their children may be instructed in its mysteries place them with a Fetish Man, who receives a premium for each. The order of Fetish Men is further augmented by persons who declare that the fetish has suddenly seized on them. A series of convulsive and unnatural bodily distortions establish their claim. Application is made to the fetish for counsel and aid in every domestic and public emergency. When persons find occasion to consult a private Fetish Man, they take a present of gold-dust and rum and proceed to his house. He receives the presents, and either puts a little of the rum on the head of every image or pours a small quantity on the ground before the platform as an offering to the whole pantheon; then, taking a brass pan with water in it, he sits down with the pan between him and the fetishes, and his inquirers also seat themselves to await the result. Having made these preparatory arrangements, looking earnestly into the water, he begins to snap his fingers, and addressing the fetish, extols his power, telling him that the people have arrived to consult him, and requesting him to come and give the desired answer. After a time the Fetish Man is wrought up into a state of fury. He shakes violently and foams at the mouth; this is to intimate that the fetish has come home and that he himself is no longer the speaker, but the fetish, who uses his mouth and speaks by him. He now growls like a tiger and asks the people if they have brought rum, requiring them at the same time to present it to him. He drinks, and then inquires for what purpose they have sent for him. If a relative is ill, they reply that such a member of their family is sick and they have tried all the means they could devise to restore him, but without success, and they, knowing he is a great fetish, have come to ask his aid, and beg him to teach them what they should do. He then speaks kindly to them, expresses a hope that he shall be able to help them, and says, 'I go to see.' It is imagined that the fetish then quits the priest, and, after a silence of a few minutes, he is supposed to return, and gives his response to the inquirers."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kingsley, "West African Studies," p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> Kingsley, "West African Studies," pp. 171-172.

**REGULATIVE SYSTEM.** Each tribe is ruled over by a king whose great symbol of power is his throne. A horse's tail hung from his shoulders indicates his rank and it is to him alone that the privilege of having an umbrella carried over his head is granted. The king also carries a staff with which he perambulates at night driving people home—thus acting as a sort of curfew. The natives were formerly very slavish to their kings, licking the soles of their feet as an indication of their subjection, and rubbing dust on their faces before they spoke to their royal master.

“The chief is surrounded by a council, the members of which are taken from the nobles or the village headmen. Several have about them nobles who gather up what they spit and take it out, a private stool-bearer, and a fool, who has to keep the environs of the palace clean. The principal burden on the chief are the fetters of the *china*, a grandeur recalling the Polynesian taboo, which forbids him—among the Loanga people the nobles also—to sleep in any place surrounded by water, whether island or boat, or to cross certain rivers. Some might not leave their dwellings at night, nor look upon the sea, a horse, or a white man. Sometimes he was a poor prisoner, with whom only his visible representative and three of the eldest men might hold intercourse, and that with their backs to him. As elsewhere among negroes, the people hear nothing of the king's death; his body moulders away in the hut, after which the bones are buried in or beside it. Then follows the well-known interregnum when lawlessness prevails. The witch-doctors discover some one who has caused the death by magical arts, and who is naturally put to death therefore. Meanwhile the elders have ascertained the lawful heir; and then a band hunt an antelope in one direction and cuts its head off, while another band in another direction similarly cut off the head of the first man they light upon. With the two heads the medicine-man then does magic business, that his consecration may not be lacking to the accession. Among some tribes the right of succession falls to the head wife; elsewhere she takes a place like the Lukokesha in Lunda.”<sup>1</sup>

“The endlessly recurring conversations and councils between the chief and his magnates bear on the coast the ill-famed name of ‘palavers’ or in older writings ‘cabals’. Every talk or council held by several persons is here called a palaver, and the name is transferred to the disputes which are settled at them. The most dangerous is the witch-palaver, at which the frequent trials for witchcraft are discussed; the most popular, as elsewhere, the brandy palaver.”<sup>2</sup>

**SECRET SOCIETIES.** Secret Societies play an important

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. III, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> Ratzel, Vol. III, pp. 128-129.



part not only socially but also politically in the lives of the people. The boys are initiated at puberty but must pass through various grades, each grade admits them to new rights and privileges, before they finally know all the secrets. Very few men reach the last stage.

The meetings of these societies are held either in a house provided for the purpose and into which no outsider may go on pain of death or a heavy fine, or in a cleared space some distance from the village. After the meeting the members sing, dance, and feast.

Surrounding these societies is a great deal of mystery for the uninitiated so that the power wielded is great. If a man of the village has a debt that he is unable to collect, he reports to the head man of the society. That night the debtor either pays or has his property confiscated.

The mystery is used by the men to keep their authority over the women. If a dispute arises *Mumbo Jumbo* is sent for. This is really a man of the society dressed in a long bark coat, and a straw head dress making him about eight feet tall. It makes weird noises as it comes out of the bush at night, for it only appears at that time. When the women hear it coming they run screaming away in fear. If, however, a woman has committed some real offense, she is dragged out from her hiding place, tied to a post and whipped with the *Mumbo's* rod. Both the pain and the terror are enough to keep her from offending again for a long time.

One of the chief implements of many of these societies is the "bull-roarer" which is sounded outside the village to announce the arrival of the members of the society. The sound is said to be the voice of a god.

In one place the members of the society act as police at night. They have the right to arrest anyone found out after 9 o'clock at night. In Lagos, criminals condemned to death are given over to the members of the society who are supposed to devour the bodies. Their clothes are afterwards found in the branches of the trees. Frequently the headless corpse of one of these unfortunates is left in the outskirts of the village, but no one dares to bury it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. Webster, "Primitive Secret Societies," pp. 115 ff.

## CHAPTER VII.

### MASAI

**HISTORY AND ENVIRONMENT.** The Masai live in the Uganda Protectorate of East Africa in a region extending from the equator to six or seven degrees south.

Sir Harry Johnston believes that the Masai represent an early mixture between the Nilotic Negro and the Hamite (Gala-Somali). This blend of peoples must have been isolated somewhere in the high mountains or plateaux which lie between the Nile and Karamoja country. Here the ancestors of the Masai race were no doubt first located, and here the Latuka—descendants of the ancestral Masai—still remains, speaking a language that is closely allied to the Masai tongue. This ancient intermixture between Hamite and Negro must have been a strong power thousands of years ago in the mountainous region east of the White Nile between Latitudes 3° and 5°. They subjugated a section of the Nilotic Negroes (the Bari), and imposed on them a corrupt dialect of the Masai stock (the Masai itself being a branch of the Nilotic family much modified by Hamitic influence). Some tumultuous movement from the north, possibly on the part of other Nilotic Negroes like the Dinka and Shiluk, or else intertribal warfare or famine consequent on drought, drove the ancestors of the modern Masai from the mountainous region east of the White Nile in the direction of Mount Elgon and Lake Rudolf.

“After a prolonged settlement on the lands lying between this great extinct volcano and the south-west coasts of Lake Rudolf, the Masai became divided into two groups—evidently not a very ancient division, since both sections speak practically the same language at the present day. The more powerful of these divisions reverted to a wholly pastoral life, a semi-nomad existence, and a devotion to cattle which caused them to raid and ravish in all directions to obtain and maintain enormous herds.”<sup>1</sup>

The weaker Masai lost a greater part of their oxen in the tribal war which took place between the agricultural and pastoral sections. Some of these people were driven to the southern end of Lake Baringo and another branch were forced from the western coast-lands of Lake Rudolf to the inhospitable country on the south and southeast of that lake.

Meantime the pastoral Masai had taken possession of the southern half of the Rift Valley. Prospering mightily and increasing in numbers by reason of their valour, they came to

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, “Uganda Protectorate,” Vol. II, pp. 796-797.

recognize only two things as worthy of their care and interest, namely, cattle and warfare. All the young able-bodied men of the tribe were dedicated to fighting for at least twelve years of their manhood and thus the pastoral Masai became the lords of East Africa about seventy or eighty years ago. Of late years circumstances have tended to change their practice if not their ideals.<sup>1</sup>

“When the Maskat Arabs first commenced the trading operations which led to their opening up the interior of Eastern Africa (about 1835), they already found that the Masai were a serious obstacle. They were a proud people, who would not stand the slightest bullying or maltreatment on the part of the Arabs or their black mercenaries, and a few wholesale massacres of Arab caravans by the Masai warriors gave the coast traders a dread (which frequently degenerated into panic), of these lithe fighters, armed with spears of great length or great breadth. In the earlier fifties of the last century the Masai raided to within sight of the Island of Mombasa. Their successful progress in the north was checked by the Gala and Somali, and by the aridity of the desert country north of the Tana River. Southwards the Masai might have carried their raids towards Tanganyika and Nyasa, but they encountered a tribe as warlike as themselves—the Wa-hehe, who had been virilised by a slight intermixture of Zulu blood, the result of a celebrated return to Central Africa on the part of a small section of the Zulu people in the first decades of the nineteenth century. The Masai probably reached their apogee about 1880. Since that time they have greatly declined in numbers, power, and pugnacity, owing to the repeated cattle plagues that swept down through Eastern Africa and destroyed so large a proportion of the cattle, which to the pastoral Masai were the one source of food.”<sup>2</sup>

**PHYSICAL FEATURES.** “The true Masai as a race are tall, well-made people, slender and lissom, with no exaggerated muscular development, and little or no tendency to corpulence. They are long limbed, and the feet and hands are relatively greater than among Europeans, though the feet are smaller and better formed than among the Bantu Negroes. They have no marked prognathism, and the nose is sometimes almost Caucasian in shape, with a well-developed bridge and finely cut nostrils. The chin is well formed, and the cheek-bones are not ordinarily as bulging as in the Nilotic Negro. The lips are sometimes prominent and much everted. The front teeth in the upper jaw are long, and are occasionally separated one from the other by a small space. The gum is often visible when the lips open, and the front teeth stick out. The mouth,

<sup>1</sup> H. H. Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 796 ff. C. Eliot, “The East African Protectorate,” pp. 134–135.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 800.

in fact, is the least pleasant feature in the face of a Masai, the rest of whose face is sometimes modelled on quite a Caucasian plan. Almost all the men and most of the women knock out the two lower incisor teeth. Mr. Sidney Hinde states that the reason given by the Masai for this practice is that tetanus was once a scourge amongst them, and that it was found to be a comparatively simple matter to feed a man suffering from lockjaw if food could be introduced through the gap caused by taking out two of his lower incisor teeth. It may be this explanation has been invented recently to explain a very ancient custom inherited by the Masai from the Nilotic stock which was their origin; for amongst these people the removal of the lower incisor teeth is a very common practice.”<sup>1</sup>

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** “Neither the agricultural nor pastoral Masai are hunters of game in the same sense as the other negro tribes of the Protectorate. The grown-up men never molest zebras, antelopes, or harmless wild beasts, though boys may sometimes capture the fawns of gazelles, and are also given to the shooting of birds with arrows, as birds’ feathers are required for certain of their ceremonies or for the making of head-dresses or capes for the warriors.”<sup>2</sup>

“When lions become a scourge in the neighbourhood of villages, or when young warriors require lion skins for their head-dresses, a party of warriors array themselves in their war-paint and sally forth to bring them to bag. The lions, having been marked down in a patch of grass, one party walks in deliberately to flush them, while others wait in the open and attack them with their spears. Occasionally the lions break back, and the manoeuvre has to be repeated. If a lion or lioness has been marked down, it very rarely escapes. In the case of a lion charging, the attackers stand absolutely still, since they maintain that a lion seldom or never charges home when any attempt at retreat means certain death. The only part of the skin used by the Masai is the mane, of which they make war head-dresses. Unlike most African races, they do not use the claws or teeth of lions as ornaments.”<sup>3</sup>

“The pastoral Masai not only do not fish in any of the lakes and rivers, but they regard fish as a most unwholesome food. The agricultural Masai obtain fish by trapping and spearing, and eat it in much the same way as do their Bantu neighbours. The agricultural Masai also keep a few fowls, and eat them, together with their eggs; but fowls and eggs are absolutely eschewed by the pastoral Masai, who never keep this domestic bird.

“The domestic animals of both divisions of this race are cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys, and dogs. The cattle are of the

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 802–803.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 812.

<sup>3</sup> Hinde, “The Last of the Masai,” pp. 83–84.

humped zebu type, and do not differ in any important respect from the other humped domestic cattle of Eastern Africa. As the mainstay of their existence, the pastoral Masai attach enormous importance to their herds of cattle; and these animals, having been brought up from birth under the constant handling of man, woman, and child, are extremely docile to their owners, with the sole exception of milk-giving. Here the Masai cow, as is so often the case among the domestic cattle of Africa, is capricious, and, from a European point of view, very tiresome. She will withhold her milk invariably if the calf is not present to her sight or sense of smell; yet her senses are easily deceived, inasmuch as she will often yield milk when a stuffed calf is held before her, even if it be little more than the skin of the dead calf roughly filled out with straw. The milking of the cows is usually done by the women twice a day, and generally in a special building erected in the village—a building in which the young calves are kept at night. In the warriors' villages, however, milking is sometimes done by the boys who herd the cattle; and all Masai men are adepts at milking both cows and goats, for which reason they are much in request as herdsmen in the employ of Europeans."<sup>1</sup>

"A barren cow is not an infrequent occurrence in the Masai herds, and such animals are selected for fattening and slaughter, as their meat is considered to be better eating than that of the bullocks. The milk is generally kept in long, bottle-shaped gourds with leather covers. Milk is always drunk fresh, and the gourds that contain it are carefully cleaned with burning grass or with a slight acrid liquid made from the leaves of a sage-plant. These methods of cleaning the gourd sometimes impart a flavor to the milk not altogether agreeable to the European palate. The cattle are always branded with some mark peculiar to the owner, who may also cut their ears in some special way so that the beast may be easily recognized as his own property. After coming back from the pasture the cattle are carefully examined, generally in close contact with a large smoky fire, so that the ticks may be removed from their bodies. The cattle are perfectly amenable to small boys, who usually act as cowherds."<sup>2</sup> However, despite this docility, the herds of Masai cattle are "well able to protect themselves in daylight on the open plains, and a young lion, leopard, or hyena has small chance of escape if he approaches a herd too closely. The whole herd will charge together, leaving nothing in their rear but a shapeless pulp to represent their overbold enemy."<sup>3</sup>

**FOOD.** "The food of the pastoral Masai varies according to the sex and status of the individual. Women and old men

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 812-813.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 814.

<sup>3</sup> C. Eliot, "The East African Protectorate," pp. 76-77.

obtain by barter flour and perhaps beans and green stuff. The young warriors subsist on nothing but milk, blood, and meat. The blood they obtain by regularly bleeding their cattle. The oxen are bled in the following manner: A leather ligature is tied tightly around the throat. Below this bandage an arrow is shot in by a warrior, and that shaft is generally blocked so that the arrow-head cannot penetrate far beyond the vein. The arrow is pulled out and the blood gushes forth. When enough blood has been collected in vessels, the ligature is removed and the orifice of the vein is stopped up by a paste of cow-dung and dust. The frothing blood is greedily drunk, and is the only way in which the Masai warrior obtains the salt necessary to his well-being. Cows' blood is often thought to be (and no doubt is), a cure for dysentery. Masai warriors may eat the flesh of oxen, sheep, goats, or eland. This meat is usually boiled in an earthenware pot, and sometimes medicine derived from herbs is mixed with it. The Masai women and old married men eat pretty much what they like, and are allowed to smoke tobacco; but during pregnancy the women rarely touch meat, consuming at that time enormous quantities of butter and milk. They also, when in this condition, eat fat, and believe that these oily substances will lubricate the passages and make delivery easier. Honey is eaten by every one who can get it. By mixing a little water with the honey an intoxicating mead is made, which is much drunk by the old men.

"The foregoing remarks about food apply mainly to the pastoral Masai: the agricultural section does not hold quite so rigidly to its special observances for the food of the young men as distinguished from that of the elders or the women; and as these people are industrious agriculturists and rear large crops of grain, pumpkins, and beans, their diet is largely of vegetable substances, though they are as fond of meat as their pastoral kinsmen and enemies."<sup>1</sup>

**WEAPONS.** "The weapons of the Masai consist of spears and shields, bows and arrows, knobkerries, and swords from a foot to eighteen inches long. The swords, which are of a peculiar shape, like long and slender leaves—very narrow towards the hilt or handle and at their broadest close to the tip—are called 'sime,' and are of widespread use throughout North-Eastern Africa, where the tribes are of the same stock or have come under the influence of the Nilotic and Masai peoples. The spear varies in shape and size. There is a very short, broad-bladed type, which is generally carried by the youths. The warriors among the Masai in the Rift Valley and elsewhere in the Uganda Protectorate and the adjoining parts of British East Africa carry a spear with an extremely long and narrow blade. The head may be fully three feet long. When it is not

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 818-819.

carried for use, the tip of the blade is generally provided with a small cap ornamented with a tuft of black feathers. The sword is worn usually girt over the right thigh in a scabbard of leather. The knobkerry is generally twisted in the same leather belt worn round the abdomen. Bows and arrows are more in use by the agricultural Masai; amongst the pastoral people they are relegated to the boys, who use a smaller bow and arrow for shooting birds. The Masai shield is very nearly an oval. It is made of ox hide or the skin of the buffalo. A piece of wood like the hooping of a cask, about an inch wide, is sewn very tightly round the edge of the oval piece of leather, while down the centre of the inside of the shield runs a broad lath of wood. This in the middle is detached from the concave surface, leaving a hollow between, through which the hand of the warrior can be passed. Nearly all Masai shields are painted; perhaps in the case of some of the agricultural Masai the leather surface is left uncovered with colour. The colours used in painting these shields are red and white (made from ferruginous clay and kaolin), and black (charcoal), and sometimes blue or yellowish brown, the source of these pigments being unknown to me. The designs on the shields are most varied, and each clan or tribal division has its own.”<sup>1</sup>

**HOUSES AND VILLAGES.** “The dwellings of the Masai are of two very distinct kinds. The agricultural Masai who are still to be found about Elgon and the south end of Baringo (there are other relics of them in East Africa, at Taveita, etc.), build houses very like those of their Bantu neighbors—round huts made with walls of reeds or sticks, surmounted by a conical, grass-thatched roof. The cattle-keeping Masai, on the contrary, build dwellings of quite peculiar construction, unlike those of any other Negro tribe. These are low, continuous houses (not more than six feet in height), which may go round or nearly round the enclosure of the settlement. They are flat-roofed, and are built of framework of stocks with strong partitions dividing the continuous structure into separate compartments which are separate dwellings, each furnished with a low, oblong door. A good deal of brushwood is worked into the sides and roofs of these rows of houses to make a foundation which will retain the plaster of mud and cow-dung which is next applied. The mud and cow-dung is thickly laid on the flat roofs, and is not usually permeated by the rain. In the villages of the agricultural Masai there are, in addition to the houses, numerous granaries holding supplies of corn and beans. The walls of these granaries are plastered with mud and cow-dung. The villages of both sections of the Masai are surrounded by fences. In the case of the agricultural Masai these are strong palisades with openings at intervals that are carefully guarded by doors made of huge hewn planks. With the pastoral Masai

<sup>1</sup>Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 819–820–821.

the hedge surrounding the settlement is of thorn bushes, and is merely arranged so as to keep off wild beasts, the pastoral Masai not having hitherto had occasion to fear the attacks of their fellow-men. Inside the villages there are one or more cattle kraals surrounded by independent hedges of thorns or sticks, and their enclosures are fenced in for sheep and goats. Inside the continuous houses of the pastoral Masai beds are made of brushwood neatly staked and covered with skins. The fireplace is simply a circle of stones. At night skins are hung over the doorway (all the doorways in the houses of the pastoral Masai are on the inner side of the circle made by the continuous houses) in order to keep out the cold night air. The only furniture in the huts besides cooking-pots and skins are long gourds used as milk vessels, half-gourds which are cups, and small three-legged stools cut out of a single block of hard wood and used by the elder men to sit on.

“The agricultural Masai live in their villages permanently. The pastoral Masai are inclined towards a semi-nomad existence, no doubt with the intention of seeking fresh pasture for their cattle. They generally, however, range within certain prescribed districts. They will often abandon a settlement for a time, and have no objection to other persons using it in their absence, providing they are ready to evacuate it without having done any harm on the return of the original owners. Formerly the warriors among the pastoral Masai, from the time they reached the age of puberty until they retired from the warrior existence and became married men, lived in villages by themselves with their mothers and sweethearts. The mothers kept house for them, and the young unmarried women attended to very little else but pleasure, though they superintended the young calves which were left behind in the settlement when the cattle were driven out every morning to pasture. A few boys would hang about these warrior villages, their presence being tolerated for their usefulness in herding cattle and milking cows and goats. With the general break-up of the Masai system of pastoral life which has come about through the repeated cattle plagues and the European administration of their country, they are rapidly beginning to live more after the normal negro fashion, in villages inhabited alike by married and unmarried men, girls and married women. Every village elects a headman, who settles all disputes and acts as leader of the warriors in case of any fighting.”<sup>1</sup>

**INDUSTRIES.** The Masai have few industries but of these the most important is the smelting and forging of iron. This metal, in the form of sand or gravel, is found in the river beds, though it is sometimes dug for in the alluvial deposits of old water courses. “The sand is picked and cleaned by the women until it is fairly pure, when it is mixed with a certain amount

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 808, 810.



of clay. It is then spread on a skin on the floor of the furnace, and juniper logs (the only fuel used in the process), are placed over the pile of clay. A number of men, varying from ten to fifty according to the size of the furnace, keep up an incessant blast, with bellows, for four days, while other men replenish the fire with fuel, throwing the logs in at the top. The blast is kept constant the whole time by relays of blowers.

“The furnace itself is made of clay, and is usually from ten to twelve feet in diameter. It is circular in shape, and open at the top, the walls being from four to five feet high, and inclining slightly inward at the apex. Apertures, about a foot apart, are left close to the ground, through which the nozzles of the bellows conduct the air into the furnace.

“After the four-days blast, two days are allowed for the fire to burn out and the furnace to cool. On the third day the men entitled to metal draw it to the openings of the furnace with long iron tongs. These tongs are made of one piece of iron, bent in the middle with a couple of rings passed over the bend to prevent them from opening wider than is required. Before the metal is taken out of the furnace, a cow is killed close by, and a small quantity of fat is taken from the dewlap and thrown on to the ashes. As soon as the warm ashes have absorbed this fat, a mixture of milk and water is poured into the furnace, and all the workers feast on the cow. Until this ceremony has been completed the iron is not removed. No other process is employed with this pig-iron before it is hammered out for use in the shape of ornaments or weapons. The Elgunoni do not employ any form of casting. A piece of iron is placed, with iron tongs similar to those used in the furnaces, on a particular kind of hard, but not too brittle, stone: this is broken into the required size, and then heated in a charcoal fire blown by bellows. The iron is hammered into shape on the stone by an oval handleless iron hammer sized according to the special use it is required for. A tool resembling a cold chisel is also used. The wood of which the bellows are made is of an exceedingly hard nature. A suitable piece of the butt of a tree is hollowed out, to the inside of which a goat's skin is fastened about halfway down, the rest of the skin being drawn out towards the top. A nozzle is fixed to the lower part of the timber drum, communicating with the interior, and from this nozzle a wet clay pipe carries the air to the fire. In the centre of the upper part of the goatskin a small hole is left, and the bellows are blown by alternately raising and pressing the skin inside the drum. When raising the skin the hole is left open, but when depressing it the hole is closed with the worker's thumb. The whole process in iron work lasts from one to three months, and the same furnace is repaired when required for use the following year.

“Earthenware is only used by the Masai in the shape of

cooking-pots. The clay employed for their making is found in certain river beds, and is of a bright red colour: this is pounded with stones, and mixed with water, until the paste has been worked to an adequately fine grain and consistency, when it is modelled by hand, with the help of a gourd split in half. In rare instances potters can throw it without the gourd. When the vessels are sufficiently dry, a small fire of grass and twigs is made, and the pots, filled with green grass, are placed in a circle round the central fire. Another fire of grass and twigs, completely covering the pots, is kept burning for twenty-four hours, care being taken that excessive heat is not developed. On removal from the fire the pots are left for a day exposed to the atmosphere, after which they are greased, both inside and outside, with animal fat and allowed to soak: they are then ready for use. The cooking utensils vary from eight to twenty inches in height, and from four to twelve inches in diameter. Occasionally small handles are attached to the edges near the top: these are, however, only large enough to allow the passing of a piece of cord through them to facilitate carrying. Large pots are not placed over the fire when in use: during cooking operations one side is exposed to the fire, and the pot is constantly turned.”<sup>1</sup>

**MARRIAGE AND POSITION OF WOMEN.** “The condition of women among the Masai offers another curious analogy to the Zulus. It is a condition which is not by any means peculiar to the Masai, as was thought by earlier travellers, but is frequently met with in other negro races showing no near kinship to this people. The Masai warrior is not allowed by the elders of his tribe to marry until he has reached about thirty years of age, and has accumulated a fair amount of property, or else has so distinguished himself by his bravery as to merit an early retirement. But from the time of his reaching puberty till the date at which he is able to marry he is by no means willing to live without the solace of female companionship. The young warrior, soon after attaining manhood (when the hair of his head, from having been previously close shaven, is now allowed to grow until it can be trained into pigtails), goes round the villages of the married people and selects one or two little girls of from eight to thirteen years old. To the mothers of the chosen damsels he makes numerous small presents, but does not give cattle or sheep, these being reserved for the marriage gift. The mother raises little or no objection to his proposition if the girls like him, and he then carries off one, two, or it may be three, to the warriors’ village or settlement.”<sup>2</sup> When a girl is nearing womanhood, she leaves the warrior and goes back to her mother. If by chance a girl remains with the man and bears him a child, he may have to support it and may decide eventually to marry the girl.

<sup>1</sup> Hinde, pp. 86, 87, 88.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 822-824.

"The young girls who live in the warriors' settlements have as agreeable a time of it as can be provided in Masai society. They are supplied with food; the mothers of the young men do all the cooking, and the girls themselves spend their time in dancing, singing, adorning themselves, and making love.

"After a woman is married—that is to say, is regularly bought by her husband—she is supposed to remain faithful to him, though it is not at all infrequent that a Masai may sanction her going with any man, especially if he be a friend or a guest. If unfaithful without permission, she might in old times have been clubbed to death, but as a general rule a breach of the marriage covenant is atoned for by a payment on the part of the adulterer. One way and another, by custom and by disposition, it must, I think, be stated that the Masai women are very immoral.

"Marriage is simply the selection of a likely girl by a retiring warrior, and the handing over to her father of a number of cows, bullocks, goats, sheep, and small additional gifts of honey, goat skins, and perhaps iron wire. After a girl is married she may not return to her father's village unless accompanied by her husband."<sup>1</sup>

"As young married women their sole duties consist in tending their children and cooking the food for their household. This life continues until they are past the age of child-bearing. It is then that their term of hardship begins, for all work of a strenuous nature is relegated to the old women. They collect the firewood, build the villages (together with the bomas that surround them), and, in common with the donkeys, carry the loads when a village is being moved. Their capacity for work is extraordinary, and they carry sixty-pound weights with ease. The night guards in the manyattas are also kept by them. They are fed and paid for their work, and a woman's children invariably contribute what is necessary in the way of food and accommodation, but nothing more. In spite of this she works until she is quite decrepit: as long as she can crawl about she continues her labours, and death is the only release she can hope for. These old women are usually of emaciated and inordinately ugly appearance, and, as a result of their badly-nourished condition, ulcers and other affections of this description are prevalent among them. Yet, notwithstanding the toil and privation to which they are subjected, they are almost invariably lively and good-tempered, and, incredible as it seems, appear to enjoy existence. They in no way resent being compelled to work, and, since they are not actively ill treated, they go on contentedly to the end."<sup>2</sup>

**SELF GRATIFICATION.** "Dancing among the Masai

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 824-825.

<sup>2</sup> Hinde, pp. 67-68.

does not differ markedly from this exercise and ritual in other races of Central Africa. There is the war-dance of the warriors when returning from a successful expedition. This is, of course, a mimic warfare, sometimes most amusing and interesting to the spectator. The men will at times become so excited that the sham fight threatens to degenerate into an angry scuffle. There are dances of a somewhat indelicate nature which precede the circumcision ceremonies of boys and girls, and dances which accompany the formal naming of a child. Barren women, or women who have not succeeded in having children, paint their faces with pipeclay in the most hideous fashion till they look like skulls, arm themselves with long sticks, and dance before a medicine man, or a big chief reputed to be a medicine man, in order that his remedies may result in the longed-for child. These dances are almost invariably accompanied by songs, and, in fact, one word in the Masai language—'os-singoloi'—means 'song-dance.'

"As regards music, they have no musical instruments except drums. They are very fond of singing, and the voices of the men occasionally are a high and agreeable tenor; but more often, like most Africans, the men sing in a disagreeable falsetto. The women's voices, though powerful, are extremely shrill—shriller than the highest soprano that ever made me shudder in a European opera-house. It struck me that the Masai women had extraordinary range of compass. They were able to produce very deep contralto notes as easily as an upper C. Singing usually means a chosen songster or songstress, yelling a solo at the top of his or her voice, and being accompanied by a chorus of men or maidens, women and men often singing together. The chorus does not usually sing the same air as the soloist, but an antistrophe."<sup>1</sup>

**BODY DECORATIONS.** "All the hair of the face and body is plucked out in both sexes by means of iron tweezers, so that no male Masai is ever seen with beard and moustache. The hair of the head is shaved by the women, and by the married men who have ceased to be warriors. It is even removed in the same way from the heads of children; but when a Masai youth has reached puberty, and is about to become a warrior, he allows the hair of his head to grow as long as it will. Tugging at the wool, and straightening it as far as he is able, he plaits into it twisted bast or thin strips of leather. In this way the hair, with its artificial accompaniments, is plaited into a number of wisps, and these, coated with red clay and mutton fat, are gathered into pigtails, or queues, the largest of which hangs down over the back, while another droops over the forehead, and there may be one over each ear. The ends of these queues are tightly bound round with string, which, like all the rest of the coiffure, is thickly coated with grease and ochre.

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 833-834.

The whole of the body in the young warriors is constantly anointed with the same proportion of reddish clay and fat, with the result that they have quite a raddled appearance, and look like statues in terra-cotta; for everything about them may be coated with this preparation of a uniform yellowish red.”<sup>1</sup>

“The Masai men do not mar or decorate their skins with patterns in scars or in tattooing; but I have noticed on the faces of the women in the Naivasha District that parallel lines are apparently burnt on the skin around the eyes or on the forehead. I could not ascertain whether this was done with a red-hot wire or by some acrid juice. The scars had a bluish look, and were intended to enhance the brilliancy of the eye. The women ordinarily remove the eyelashes and the hair from the eyebrows. In both sexes the ears are terribly deformed by piercing the lobe at an early age and inserting through the hole larger and larger discs or rounded pieces of wood. These are gradually increased in size until the lobe becomes a great loop of leathery skin. To this loop they attach ear-rings of fine iron chain or European nails and screws, or depending coils of iron wire like catherine-wheels. The ear is also pierced in the upper part of the conch, near what is called ‘Darwin’s point.’ From this hole also may depend loops of fine iron chain or strings of beads. The men may wear bead necklaces and bead armlets. On the upper part of the left arm, just below the deltoid muscle, is a tight armlet of wood, which grips the flesh, and is furnished with two upright projections. A string of charms, which may be pieces of smooth stone or of hard, smooth wood, of irregular size, is generally worn round the neck by the men, who may also have a girdle round the waist composed of a string of beads with fine iron chains. Bracelets of iron wire or of ivory may also be worn by the men on the wrists.

“As regards clothing, the two sexes differ considerably. Women from girlhood to old age are usually clothed most scrupulously, though it is not considered improper to expose the bosom. Their garments were formerly dressed hides which hung from the neck down to the knees, with a kind of leather petticoat underneath. Nowadays many of the women dispense with leather and wear voluminous pieces of calico from the coast. Old men generally wear a skin or a cloth cape over the shoulders. Hitherto men, old and young, of the Masai tribe have been absolutely indifferent as to whether such covering as they wore answered purposes of decency. They might even be styled ostentatiously naked in this respect, though I have never known them to be guilty of any gesture of deliberate indecacy. Young warriors going to battle swathe round their waists as many yards of red calico as they can get hold of, and will further throw pieces of calico over their shoulders as capes.

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 803–804.

They also wear huge mantles of birds' feathers, in shape and volume like the fur capes worn by coachmen in cold weather. A great circle of ostrich plumes is often worn round the face. When decorated for warfare, they tie fringes of long white hair tightly below the knee, generally on one leg—the left. This white hair is either derived from goats or from the skin of the colobus monkey. Some of the eastern Masai make handsome capes of the black and white colobus fur, which are worn over the chest. Unmarried girls may wear a few bracelets, but as soon as a young Masai woman, or 'dito,' is about to marry, she has coils of thick iron wire wound round her legs. She will also wear armlets and bracelets of this same wire, and perhaps an additional armlet or two of ivory. Huge coils of the same thick iron wire may be worn round the neck in addition to the 'catherine-wheel' ornaments and uncounted strings of beads. Or she may have round her neck a great fringe of leather thongs, to which are fastened large beads."<sup>1</sup>

**RELIGION.** The religious ideas of the Masai are vague and very little has been developed in the way of a cultus or mythology. There is a sky god who is invoked when rain is needed for the crops.

"The Masai, agricultural and pastoral, deal with their dead in a very summary manner. Unless the dead person is a male and a chief, the corpse is simply carried to a short distance from the village, and left on the ground to be devoured by hyenas, jackals, and vultures. The constant presence of hyenas and the small *Neophron* and *Neerosyrtes*, and the large *Otogyps* vultures round the Masai kraals is encouraged by this practice, and the Masai never actively interfere with these scavengers, unless a hyena should attempt—as they sometimes do—to enter a village and carry off live-stock or children. Important chiefs, however, are buried, and a year after the burial the eldest son or the appointed successor of the chief carefully removes the skull of the deceased, making at the same time a sacrifice and a libation with the blood of a goat, some milk, and some honey. The skull is then carefully secreted by the son, whose possession of it is understood to confirm him in power, and to impart to him some of the wisdom of his predecessor. In several parts of the Rift Valley cairns of stones meet the eye. They mark the burial-places of dead chiefs, though there is probably no supreme chief of the Masai race buried in that direction."<sup>2</sup>

"The Masai do not believe in a future life for women or common people. Only chiefs and influential head-men possess any life beyond the grave. It is thought that some of their more notable ancestors return to earth in the shape of snakes—either pythons or cobras. The tribal snakes of the Masai must

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 804–805–806–808.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 827–828.

be black because they themselves are dark skinned. They believe that white snakes look after the welfare of Europeans. These snakes certainly live in a half-tamed state in the vicinity of large Masai villages, generally in holes or crevices. They are supposed never to bite a member of the clan which they protect; but they are ready to kill the enemies of that clan and their cattle. When a Masai marries, his wife has to be introduced to the tutelary snake of the clan and rigorously ordered to recognize it and never to harm it. Even the children are taught to respect these reptiles. These snakes sometimes take up their abode near water-holes, which, it is supposed, they will defend against unlawful use on the part of strangers. The fetish snake is often consulted by people in perplexity, though what replies it is able to give must be left to the imagination. The snakes are, however, really regarded with implicit belief as being the form in which renowned ancestors have returned to this mundane existence.”<sup>1</sup>

“Another superstitious custom to which the Masai formerly attached much importance was the act of spitting. In marked contradistinction to the prejudice against expectoration as a polite custom in European societies, not only amongst the Masai, but in the allied Nandi and Suk peoples, to spit at a person is a very great compliment. The earlier travellers in Masailand were astonished, when making friendship with old Masai chiefs and head-men, to be constantly spat at. When I entered the Uganda Protectorate and met the Masai of the Rift Valley for the first time, every man, before extending his hand to me, would spit on the palm. When they came into my temporary house at Naivasha Fort they would spit to the north, east, south, and west before entering the house. Every unknown object which they regarded with reverence, such as a passing train, is spat at. Newly born children are spat on by every one who sees them. They are, of course, being laughed out of the custom now by the Swahilis and Indian coolies and the Europeans; and it must be admitted that, however charming a race the Masai are in many respects, they will lose none of their inherent charm by abandoning a practice which, except in parts of America and Southern Europe, is very justly regarded with disgust.”<sup>2</sup>

**NAME.** “A dead man is never referred to by name, if possible. It is considered so unlucky to do this that the action is equivalent to an intentional desire to bring harm on the relatives of the deceased. If any reference must be made to a dead person, it is generally by means of a roundabout description, or by such terms as ‘my brother,’ ‘my father,’ ‘my uncle,’ ‘my sister.’ Husbands and wives may with less disastrous consequences

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 832.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 833.

refer to their dead partners by name, though even this is done in a whisper and with reluctance. Amongst the living there is a very intricate ceremony on the subject of addressing by name, and a Masai of good manners would feel quite at home in the British House of Commons, where much the same prejudice prevails. If you wish to get at the real name borne by a Masai man, it is advisable to ask one of his friends standing by, who in reply, will probably give you the name of the man's mother, if he be an eldest son and unmarried, for in such case it must be identical with the man's own name. It is not considered unlucky if a person in speaking to you mentions your name in your presence; it is the employment of the name in direct address which is thought to bring ill luck. Any one who is asked abruptly for his name probably gives that of his father, which may, of course, also be his. A child would never address his father or mother by name, but would call them 'father' or 'mother.' A married man would also not call to his father- and mother-in-law by their names, but would address them by an honorific title; a woman would simply call her husband's parents 'father' and 'mother.' Boys may address other boys and young girls by their names; but they must speak to all the warriors as 'El Morran,' married or old women as 'Koko,' and old married men as 'Baba.' Women generally address old or married men of any importance as 'Ol Baiyan' ('Elder'). A married man would probably call out to a woman, not by name, but address her as 'Eñ gitok' ('Woman'). If a Masai bears the same name as a member of his tribe who dies, he may change his own name to avoid ill luck."<sup>1</sup>

**REGULATIVE ORGANIZATION.** Usually the chief ruler of the Masai is a powerful "medicine man." He is credited with second sight, which he can invoke at will and transmit to his heirs through the agency of a certain medicine, the ingredients of which are known only to the royal family.

"Once or twice during each year the reigning chief invokes this power, and usually remains under its influence for several days together, the taking of the medicine being invariably followed by a drinking bout. On recovering from the effects of this, he makes known to his followers the intimation regarding the future revealed to him during the influence of the royal medicine.

"Before a raid is undertaken the power is invoked, and the prophet then directs his warriors where and how to attack, and in what places the cattle are to be found. By some extraordinary means—possibly not unconnected with the secret service system, which is carried to great perfection among the Masai—these predictions are almost invariably correct."<sup>2</sup>

"In each village a man is selected as chief (legooran),

<sup>1</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, pp. 826-827.

<sup>2</sup> Hinde, pp. 23-24.



whose function it is to settle all difficulties and disputes, and to lead his followers into battle. This chief may be an elder, though more frequently he is a senior warrior of greater experience than his associates.”<sup>1</sup>

As has been mentioned here before, the chief occupations of the Masai are cattle raising and fighting. The latter is engaged in by most of the young men. “In former days, before the Masai warriors, called ‘El Morran,’ started on an expedition, they would fortify their courage with a war medicine, which was said to be the bark of *Acacia verrugosa*. This bark, when chewed, would make them either frantic or stupified, thus lulling any apprehensions. Once on the war-path, however, they were invariably brave, as public opinion would probably visit any sign of cowardice with execution. The Masai warriors would travel as much as fifty miles a day at a constant trot. In old days they thought nothing of going 300 miles—even 500 miles—to attack a people or a district which was supposed to be rich in cattle. They would sometimes travel at night as well as in the daytime, but their favourite time of attack was just at dawn. In the first ardour of battle they would slay every man and boy with their huge spears, but women were very rarely killed. It is stated that the Masai have generally been in the habit of warning their enemies before making an attack on them, but I certainly remember myself in 1884 having reported to me a great many instances of the Masai round Kilimanjaro taking or attempting to take Bantu villages wholly by surprise. No doubt in the case of tributary people a warning would be sent first that the overdue tributes must be paid up, and in the event of this notice remaining unheeded the warriors would descend on the rebellious vassal.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hinde, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> Johnston, Vol. II, p. 822.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### AUSTRALIANS.

**ENVIRONMENT.** Australia is an island with an area of about 3,000,000 square miles lying between the parallels 10 degrees 39 minutes and 39 degrees 11½ minutes South. Its greatest length is 2,400 miles from East to West, and its greatest breadth 1,971 miles from North to South. The coast line is comparatively regular being only 8,850 miles in length. The land mass rises to a mean height much less than that of any other continent.

The contour of Australia may be described as follows. On the East a low, fertile coastal plain which rises sharply to a mountain range about 40 miles from the sea. West of these mountains are the great plains covering an area of about 500,000 square miles. These plains gradually rise to the low steppes which are 500 to 1,000 feet above the sea. A further rise through the high steppes leads to the mountains of the West coast, while beyond these is a low coastal plain.

The rivers of Australia are of little use for navigation for they have much water during the wet season and almost none during the rest of the year. Those along the East coast have short rapid courses. The two most important rivers of Australia, the Murray and the Darling, flow into Encounter Bay, South Australia. The discharge of the Darling does not amount to more than 10 per cent. of the rainfall on its drainage area. Hence, about 90 per cent. must evaporate and sink into the soil.

**CLIMATE.** "The Australian continent extending over 28 degrees of latitude, might be expected to show a considerable diversity of climate. In reality, however, it experiences fewer climatic variations than the other great continents, owing to its distance (28 degrees) from the Antarctic circle and (11 degrees) from the equator. There is, besides, a powerful determining cause in the uniform character and undivided extent of its dry interior. The plains and steppes already described lie either within or close to the tropics. They present to the fierce play of the sun almost a level surface, so that during the day that surface becomes intensely heated and at night gives off its heat by radiation. Ordinarily the alternate expansion and contraction of the atmosphere, which takes place under such circumstances, would draw in a supply of moisture from the ocean, but the heated interior, covering some 900,000 square miles, is so immense, that the moist air from the ocean does not come in sufficient supply, nor are there mountain chains to

intercept the clouds which from time to time are formed; so that two-fifths of Australia, comprising a region stretching from the Australian Bight to 20 degrees S. and from 117 degrees to 142 degrees E., received less than an average of 10 inches of rain throughout the year, and a considerable portion of this region has less than 5 inches."<sup>1</sup>

The prevailing winds of Australia are the southeast trades which, because of the mountain range, deposit most of their moisture on the east coast. By the time they reach the central and western part of the country, they are devoid of all moisture. Hence, as one moves inland from the eastern range of mountains, the land becomes dryer and dryer, the grass thins away into isolated tufts, and finally barren rocks appear, or the land becomes impregnated with salt.

The northern portion of Australia is watered by the monsoons and for that reason is much more fertile than the western or southern parts of the country. This region, lying as it does entirely in the tropics, has a very slight range of temperature for the year.

In the south of Australia the cold months of June, July, and August have an average temperature of 58 degrees with almost no snow and very little ice. The summer months are very dry with the thermometer frequently standing at 100 degrees in the shade.

**HISTORY.** "The origin of the natives of Australia presents a difficult problem. The chief difficulty in deciding their ethnical relations is their remarkable physical difference from the neighboring peoples. And if one turns from physical criteria to their manners and customs it is only to find fresh evidence of their isolation. While their neighbors, the Malays, Papuans and Polynesians, all cultivate the soil, and build substantial huts and houses, the Australian natives do neither. Pottery, common to Malays and Papuans, the bows and arrows of the latter, and the elaborate canoes of all three races, are unknown to the Australians. They then must be considered as representing an extremely primitive type of mankind, and it is necessary to look far afield for their prehistoric home.

"Wherever they came from, there is abundant evidence that their first occupation of the Australian continent must have been at a time so remote as to permit of no traditions. No record, no folk tales, as in the case of the Maoris of New Zealand, of their migration, are preserved by the Australians. True, there are legends and tales of tribal migrations and early tribal history, but nothing, as A. W. Howitt points out, which can be twisted into referring even indirectly to their first arrival. It is almost incredible that there should be none, if the date of their arrival is to be reckoned as only dating back some

<sup>1</sup> Encycl. Brit. under Australia, p. 945.

centuries. Again, while they differ physically from neighboring races, while there is practically nothing in common between them and the Malays, the Polynesians, or the Papuan Melanese, they agree in type so closely among themselves that they must be regarded as forming one race. Yet it is noteworthy that the languages of their several tribes are different. The occurrence of a large number of roots proves them to be derived from one source, but the great variety of dialects—sometimes unintelligible between tribes separated by only a few miles—cannot be explained except by supposing a vast period to have elapsed since their first settlement. There is evidence in the language, too, which supports the physical separation from their New Zealand neighbors and, therefore, from the Polynesian family of races. The numerals in use were limited. In some tribes there were only three in use, in most four. For the number ‘five’ a word meaning ‘many’ was employed. The linguistic poverty proves that the Australian tongue has no affinity to the Polynesian group of languages, where denary enumeration prevails: the nearest Polynesians, the Maoris, counting in thousands. Further evidence of the antiquity of Australian man is to be found in the strict observance of tribal boundaries, which would seem to show that the tribes must have been settled a long time in one place.”<sup>1</sup>

**PHYSIQUE.** The people of Australia belong to the black race. Those living in the north are physically and intellectually better developed than those in the southeast and west. This is due largely to the character of the country in which they are living, for they are better able to pursue the struggle for existence, because of the more favorable climatic conditions, and are thus able to build up a better physique. The Australians of the south and central portion are of medium stature, but very lean, owing to the bad nutrition. We see in them certain Malay characteristics in the straight rather woolly hair, and the prominent cheek bones; the characteristics of the negro in the prominent eyebrows, the flat nose, the thick lips, the prognathous jaw and the dolichocephalic skull. A particular characteristic of the Australian is the ridge of the nose which is so deeply depressed that a line drawn from one eye to the other makes only a very slight curve. They have a large amount of hair on the head and on the body, and also a very full beard. The hair is so important a race characteristic that the taunt applied to European people, “You naked cheeks,” is one of the challenges always taken up by the beardless youth among the south Australians. A beardless Australian is an isolated pathological accident.

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** We cannot understand the life and the civilization of the Australians apart from their nomad-

<sup>1</sup> Encycl. Brit., pp. 954-955.

ism, to which all the natural conditions of the land contribute. At the bottom of it lies the deficiency of the water and the unequal distribution of the plant and animal food supplies. The dry season, which is often of long duration, causes much of the country to be uninhabitable, so that the people are obliged to move into some more favorable quarter in order to secure the barest subsistence. Vegetable matter is often to be sought at great distances, while the animals avoid the dry regions almost as much as do the men. Thus it is that the food supply is the determining factor in the life of the Australians and because of its scarcity they are obliged to move from place to place.

The people prefer an animal diet, but for much of the year they are forced to content themselves with a vegetable one. Their food consists of fish, snakes, lizards, grubs of the beetle, birds' eggs, roots, bulbs and other vegetable matter, but the supply of these varies with different parts of the country. Of the larger animals, the kangaroo and the emu are preferred by the people. The people never under any conditions engage in agriculture or even cultivate the soil to the slightest degree.

In hunting, the weapons they use are the boomerang, the hurling stick and the spear, and in war, the shield and the ax are added. The boomerang is a piece of wood two to three feet long, bent almost at right angles and with a twist in the surface. In the use of this weapon they become so skilful that they can throw it and have it almost return to their hand. With this weapon they are able to bring down flying birds and small animals at two hundred paces. If it strikes an object, it falls to the ground. An expert thrower can send it in any direction which he pleases. It is a very dangerous weapon of war for it is impossible to judge when it is seen in the air, how far it will go or where it will come down.

The Australians have several very clever methods of catching birds. A native will stretch himself out on a rock in the sun with a piece of meat in his hand. When a bird, attracted by the bait, make a swoop for it, the man seizes it by the leg. Water fowls are caught in a similar way. A man swims under water, and when, beneath the bird, grabs its leg, pulls it under, breaks its neck, and places it in his belt.<sup>1</sup>

The kangaroo is captured in wet weather with dogs, but usually nets are used into which the animal is driven. An Australian will often stalk a kangaroo alone. "Starting on its recent tracks, he follows them until he comes in sight of it, using no concealment, he boldly heads for it and it scours away, followed by the hunter. This is repeated again and again until nightfall when the black lights a fire and sleeps on the track; next day the chase recommences, till human per-

<sup>1</sup> N. W. Thomas, "Natives of Australia," p. 96.

tinacity has overcome the endurance of the quadruped, and it falls a victim to its pursuer."

Before the animal is cooked, the tail sinews are drawn out and kept to be used in sewing cloaks or lashing spears. The chief method of cooking the kangaroo is to dig an oven in the sand, heat it thoroughly by means of hot stones, and then place the animal in it, skin and all. A slow fire is kept up all of the time, and when it is cooked the animal is taken out, laid on its back, its intestines taken out; the body is then cut up and eaten.

The preparation of food is of the crudest sort. Being entirely without pottery, they have only limited facilities for preparing the food. Boiling over a fire is unknown. Birds are generally cooked by plucking them and throwing them on the fire. If the natives wish to be more careful, they cover the bird with a coating of mud before putting it on the fire. It is then covered with hot ashes and left until thoroughly cooked. When the mud crust is taken off, the feathers come with it. Although only a small portion of their food is consumed raw, yet much of it is hardly warmed through before it is devoured. The pots and cups are made of shells, and drinking vessels are formed from the skulls of enemies made water-tight by gum. Tortoise shells and skins of animals are used for holding their various articles of food.

The only domesticated animal which the Australians have is the dingo, or dog.

**CANNIBALISM.** Cannibalism, although not universal among the Australians, is nevertheless practised to some extent. The motives of this are various. Some tribes go out on expeditions in order to steal fat people and, it is reported by Ratzel,<sup>1</sup> that a man who is the lucky possessor of a fat wife never allows her to go out alone for fear that she will be captured and eaten by a neighboring tribe. Along the west coast where the natives have come in contact with the Europeans, cannibalism has practically died out, but even here it sometimes occurs when the food supply is scarce. Among the tribes of Central Australia the bodies of the dead are devoured in order to avoid the necessity of further mourning.

**HOUSES.** The people in the south and southeast build no houses, for they do not stay in one place long enough to pay them for putting up permanent structures. In order to make a slight protection against the sun, the cold and the rain, they build rough "lean-to's" of bark or boughs. This affords little shelter, but the open side is turned away from the wind so that it protects the fire and enables them to get the heat without the smoke. In the north, however, they have huts made of interwoven twigs, plastered with clay and sod, which are large

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, "History of Mankind," Vol. I, p. 362.

enough to hold ten people. In some parts of this tropical region they have large villages, which indicates a more settled mode of life.

**WAR.** The Australians are a very warlike people, although the actual conflicts are not serious. The battles consist for the most part of yells and the hurling of approbrious epithets. When they have worked themselves up to a sufficiently high pitch of excitement, a spear is discharged. If the blood is drawn, the conflict is ended, for the honor of the tribe has been saved.

**MARRIAGE.** The marriage system of the Australians is one of the most complicated found anywhere among the savage peoples of the world. It is based upon exogamy, that is, a man and woman must marry outside of their own totem group and into only certain others. The least trace of blood relationship, as they conceive of it, is a bar to marriage, and any couple entering such a union are put to death by their own people. A man is allowed as many wives as he can support, but as a rule, because of the poor condition of the country, a man is satisfied with one or two, although cases have been reported where men had eleven. "The process of acquiring a bride differs in different tribes. She may be exchanged for a sister, the simplest and perhaps the commonest form; she may be betrothed at, or even, provisionally, before birth, but this is usually part of a process of barter; she may be abducted, either from an already existing, or a prospective husband, or from her relatives; or she may be inherited from a brother or tribal kinsman."<sup>1</sup>

While marriage by capture does occur, and is the cause of a great many fights, yet it is not the common mode of securing a wife. In the southeast the man obtains the consent of a girl in a neighboring tribe and then elopes with her. They stay away for several days in order to escape, as they say, the pursuit of her tribesman. In New South Wales, although the consent of the girl may have been obtained and she is agreeable to the match, yet when the bridegroom and his friends go for her, she puts up a terrible fight and calls to her assistance, her friends. But the fight is a mere sham, a survival of a more serious action, still the girls would hate to give it up for it gives them the feeling of being of greater value. Frequently wives are purchased, and it is not an uncommon thing for the parents of the boy and girl to arrange a marriage even before the children are able to walk. If a man wishes to marry a girl, he approaches the one who gives her away, through an intermediary. The relations come together, bringing with them the girl. A torch light dance takes place for two nights and then the marriage is complete. If the bride is still very young, the husband rubs her over with fat to make her grow, and then returns her to her parents until she is older.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas, "Natives of Australia," p. 114.

A married woman is the absolute property of her husband, and she is compelled to do all of the hard work, such as building the houses, lighting and tending the fires and collecting the roots and other vegetable foods. Besides these duties, she must attend to the children, and this is a laborious task, for they are not weaned until they are three or four years old.

**INFANTICIDE.** Infanticide is very common. A large number of children are put to death almost immediately after birth. This is accomplished either by thrusting a stick through the orifice of the ears into the skull, after which the body is burned, or by throttling and hitting on the head with a club. The causes for infanticide are various. If a child is born before the next older is able to walk, it is put to death. An Australian mother can hardly take care of two very young children at the same time. All misshapen children are killed, one or both of a pair of twins, at least half of the children of white fathers, due, it is supposed to jealousy; a large number of female children; and finally, children of marriages entered into unwillingly. Should, however, the parents decide that a child is to live, every possible care is given to it so that it may grow up as a strong member of the tribe.

**INITIATION OF THE BOYS.** As soon as a boy is old enough to walk, his farther takes him on hunting and fishing expeditions and instructs him in all those things which a man should know about the pursuit of the necessities of life.

Among the Australians, as among most savage peoples, when a boy reaches the age of puberty, the time has arrived for him to leave the company of women, with whom he has been living, and join himself to the men. Before he can do this, he must be taught many things, among them the secrets of the tribe or totem, into which he is to enter as a full-fledged member. In many cases these ceremonies are of a dramatic nature, especially in those communities where the totem holds a prominent place. As a rule, the rite of circumcision is performed, thus making him, as they think, a more fit member of society. These ceremonies start when a boy is ten or twelve years old and are often not finished until he has reached the age of twenty-five or thirty. This time is the most important in the life of a youth, for announcement is made to the world that he is no longer a child, but has reached that age when he is fit to enter man's estate and perform the functions for which he was intended.

Up to the time of the initiation the youth has had practically no systematic instruction and so his schooling really begins at the age when most civilized children are well grounded in the so-called fundamentals. "The knowledge is conveyed to the savage boy in a most effective manner, by means of various elaborate ceremonies of a dramatic nature, performed by mem-



bers of the different totems and intended to picture events in the life of the mythic ancestral individuals who lived in the ancient time—half animal creations whose descendants are the present members of the tribe. Thus, performances which seem on the outside merely imitations of different animals are really part of the instruction of the novice in the sacred lore connected with the totems and the ancestors of the various clans.”<sup>1</sup>

Another purpose of these ceremonies is to teach the novice in a most vivid fashion those things which in the future he must avoid. For this reason many of the rites are almost equivalent to a morality play. “At first sight some of the performances seem to be very immoral, being presented on the principle of *similia similibus curantur*. Those men who guard the boys talk to the boys in an inverted language so that the real meaning is just opposite of what they say. At the end of every sentence the speaker adds ‘Yah,’ which negatives all that has been said and done. Indeed, the use of the word ‘Yah’ runs through the whole conversation carried on during the ceremonies.”<sup>2</sup> “The lads are told that this is done in order that they may learn to speak the truth. Various offences against morality are exhibited and the guardians warn the novices of their death or of violence, should they attempt to repeat the actions which they have just witnessed. There are many obscene gestures for the purpose of shocking the young fellows; and if the latter show the least sign of mirth or frivolity, they are hit on the head by an old man who is appointed to watch them.”<sup>3</sup> In one ceremony four or five of the old men sit on the ground making mud pies. The guardian of the boys says to them, “Look at that! Look at those old men, when you get back to camp, go and do like that, and play with little children—Yah!”<sup>4</sup>

**CLOTHING AND BODY DECORATION.** The clothing of the Australians is very sparse and consists for the most part of a girdle of plaited grass or hair. In some places a cloak of opossum’s or dog’s skin is worn. Frequently, even in Central and South Australia, the people go entirely naked, despite the severe and changeable character of the climate. What they lack in clothing is made up in paint and tattoo designs. The patterns which are painted on the body are usually connected with the totems, especially when they are placed on the body during the initiation ceremonies of the boys. Hence, they have not only an ornamental, but also a religious value. Tattooing consists in the cicatrization of the skin. Most of the elder men of the tribe are thus marked and often the ceremony takes place at the time of admission to the class of elders. This very

<sup>1</sup> H. Webster, “Primitive Secret Societies,” pp. 140-141.

<sup>2</sup> A. W. Howitt, Native Tribes of Central Australia, p. 533.

<sup>3</sup> Webster, pp. 49 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Howitt, p. 534.

painful operation is performed with pieces of shell or sharp stones. A deep gash is made in the chest or back and the wound filled with dirt or ashes; so that when it heals a very high scar is left. A girl is not allowed to marry until she has been tattooed and it is often by the totem marks on her back that a man determines whether she belongs to the class into which, by custom, he is allowed to marry.

**PLEASURES.** The favorite amusements of the Australians are singing and dancing. The musical instruments which they have are of the crudest sort—two pieces of bamboo struck together, or a rolled up skin, upon which time is beaten. Dancing is always accompanied by songs, which usually have a very melancholy note running through them. It is often difficult to distinguish between their singing and speaking. During great emotion their speech passes into song and the time depends upon their degree of passion. They sing frequently not only their joy and sorrow, but also their hunger and anger. Many of their songs describe their experience in war and in the chase, and the dances which accompany many of these are the pantomimic representation of the actual events.

“Best known are the gymnastic dances of the Australians, the corroborries, which have been described in nearly every account of Australian travel, for they are known over the whole continent. The corroborries are always performed at night, and generally by moonlight. We do not, however, consider it necessary, for that reason, to regard them as religious ceremonies. Moonlight nights are chosen probably not because they are holy, but because they are clear. The dancers are usually men, while women form the orchestra. Frequently several tribes join in a great dancing festival; four hundred participants have occasionally been counted in Victoria. The largest and most noteworthy festivals apparently take place on the conclusion of a peace; moreover, all the more important events of Australian life are celebrated by dances—the ripenings of a fruit, the beginning of the oyster dredging, the initiation of the youth, a meeting with a friendly tribe, the march to battle, a successful hunt.”<sup>1</sup>

**RELIGION.** The religion of the Australian is closely connected with the mythical ancestors of the past. They inhabit the sun, moon, stars, animals, trees and in fact nearly all objects in nature. There are numerous legends concerning these beings which account for the creation not only of man, but also of all other things on the earth. One of the most important elements in the religion of the Australian is the totem. This is a class of material objects such as a certain kind of an animal or plant, sun or rain, to which the natives think themselves actually akin, and in connection with which they feel that there is an

<sup>1</sup> E. Grosse, “The Beginnings of Art,” pp. 207 ff.

intimate and altogether special relation. Men belonging to the kangaroo totem are not allowed to eat that animal, but they are supposed by certain ceremonies to keep a supply of that animal in the country, so that the men of the other totems may have plenty to eat. Under certain circumstances they are allowed to kill their own totem animal, but they must hand it over to other people to be eaten.

Besides the totem a man has an individual guardian spirit, that is, a tutelary deity, who looks after him especially. This is either assigned to him by the medicine man, or acquired in a dream or in some other way, but it is not hereditary.

Magic plays an important part in the Australian religion. It is through its agency that the animals are caused to appear, rain made to fall, and people placed in the power of those who can wield its influence. The magic of the savage is based upon two fundamental principles; first, that like produces like, or that effect resembles its cause. That is, he feels that in order to produce the phenomena of nature upon which he depends for his very life, he has only to imitate them, and by some secret sympathy the gods will be required to grant his request. The second principle is, that things which have once been in contact but have ceased to be so, continue to act on each other as if the contact still persisted. He feels that he can influence any person no matter how great the distance, provided he has some part of the body such as the nails or hair, or something with which the person has come in contact.

The strongest magic resides in certain parts of the human body or in the remains of human food. Every black fellow tries to obtain, for purposes of magic, the bones and the back-bones of certain birds and fishes of which someone has consumed the flesh. By means of these he thinks that he can acquire power over that man for life and death. In order to adapt the bones for that purpose they are first scraped, and then a lump of red ochre, fish oil, the eye of a fish, and the flesh from a corpse, are stuck upon them, and the whole is laid on the breast of a human corpse. Then, if the other person annoys the magician, he sticks the bone in the earth near the fire so that the lump slowly melts away; as it melts it causes the man for whom it was intended to fall ill at however great a distance. Human kidney fat possesses magical power against evil spirits, and it is accordingly extracted from corpses and even from living prisoners.

When the wife of a Central Australian native has eloped from him and he cannot recover her, the disconsolate husband repairs with some sympathizing friends to a secluded spot, where a man skilled in magic draws on the ground a rough figure supposed to represent the woman lying on her back. Beside the figure is laid a piece of green bark, which stands

for her spirit or soul, and at it the men throw miniature spears which have been made for the purpose and charmed by singing over them. This barken effigy of the woman's spirit, with the little spears sticking in it, is then thrown as far as possible in the direction which she is supposed to have taken. During the whole of the operation the men chant in a low voice, the burden of the song being an invitation to the magic influence to go out and enter her body and dry up all her fat. Sooner or later—often a good deal later—her fat does dry up, she dies, and her spirit is seen in the sky in the form of a shooting star.<sup>1</sup>

The doctor or "medicine-man" is a very important functionary among the Australians for he it is who has the power of warding off the evil magic influence of some other man. A man becomes a medicine-man by having certain stones or other objects put into his body by spirits. Before this takes place he falls into a trance lasting two or three days, and when he wakes up, he is supposed to have forgotten all his life before. This office is often hereditary. These men believe more or less in their own powers, perhaps because they believe in those of others. The belief in magic in its various forms—in dreams, omens, and warnings—is so universal, and mingles so intimately with the daily life of the aborigines, that no one, not even those who practise deceit themselves, doubts the power of other medicine-men, or that if men fail to effect their magical purposes the failure is due to error in the practice, or to the superior skill or power of some adverse practitioner.<sup>2</sup>

**DEATH AND BURIAL.** The only death regarded by the Australians as natural is death in battle. Their minds cannot put up with the idea of death as a necessity. Every death that is not brought about by visible violence seems to them the result of magical arts. These are facilitated by giving the physician something which has been taken from the person to be acted upon; and for that reason fragments of food, gnawed bones, and the like, are carefully burnt. The first funeral ceremony consists in discovering the enemy who has done the mischief. Among the Port Lincoln tribes the nearest of kin sleeps the first night with his head on the body, in order that in his dreams some indication of the magician may reach him. On the following day the corpse is borne out upon a bier, and now the friends of the deceased call out the names of various persons. At some one of these they say that the body gives a start in a particular direction and moves toward the criminal. The Adelaide natives carry the dead on a wheel-shaped bier of branches; one man in the center supporting the body with his head, until the inquest has arrived at a conclusion. Relations who do not lament sufficiently at the funeral are easily suspected of complicity in the death. Among other tribes in the

<sup>1</sup> Thomas, "Source Book for Social Origins," p. 654.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas, p. 670.

south the corpse is laid on a bier called "the Knowing One," and questioned. A movement of the bier is regarded as an affirmative. If it does not move, further questions are asked.

Another way, used widely in the southeast, of detecting the magician, was to observe the direction in which some insect crawled from the grave. Or one man would cleverly find foot-prints leading towards a suspicious person.

If the reputed slayer belongs to another tribe, the friends of the accused formally curse the dead man and all his deceased relatives; thus affording a *casus belli*. Before the fight, the dead man's tribe raises a loud cry of grief, while the other side excite them by laughter, mocking dances, and buffooneries. Both sides then revile each other vigorously; a few spears are thrown and a slight wound or two given. Finally the old men declare that honour is satisfied.<sup>1</sup>

In West Australia the grave is made in a north and south direction, and the face of the corpse is turned towards the east; the legs are doubled under the body, so that the heels touch the thighs; the hair is cut off and a nail from the little finger of the right hand; the finger and thumb are tied together. White earth is smeared on the forehead; a fire is lighted upon the grave, the ashes and smoke of which are feared by all. The spear and wommera, or spear-thrower, of the dead man are broken and a screen of boughs erected round the sepulchral mound; in front of it is a fire; on the surrounding trees are cut rings and notches.

Further to the north, burial in the earth is preceded by a longer or shorter sojourn in a tree, save in the case of the old women; the tribes say frankly that it is not worth while to trouble about them; we may, therefore, perhaps infer that the placing of the body in a tree is in some way a protection of the living, or to their advantage. When a young woman or man or even a child dies, on the other hand, the body is placed in a tree on a platform of boughs; on the actual spot on which a man dies is placed a small mound and the camp removed from the neighborhood. A day or two after death this mound is carefully examined to see if any animal or creeping thing has left its traces there; if any traces are found they infer from them the direction in which the murderer of the dead man lives.

The spirit of the dead person is believed to hover about the tree; sometimes it visits the camp and is recognized by its strange whistling voice. At intervals it is asked if the time has come for the body to be finally buried; when the proper opportunity has arrived, a few men go to the tree, cut a bark basket, and one of them rakes the bones out onto it; the skull is smashed into fragments. An ant hill is then selected and the

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Mankind, Vol. I, p. 374.

top taken off; into this the bones are put, with the exception of the thigh bone, which is wrapped round with fur string and made into a torpedo-shaped parcel. On the next day the burumburu, as it is called, is brought to the camp and received by some of the women, who wail at intervals. After some further ceremonies the bone is broken into fragments with a blow of an axe, and put into a pit, which is then covered with a stone. After this the spirit part of the dead person, which is said to be about the size of a grain of sand, goes to the place of spirits and remains there until it is time for it to be reincarnated. A curious feature of the belief in recarnation is that the spirit becomes a male and a female alternately; perhaps this accounts for the even-handed justice that is meted out to men and women in the matter of burial rites.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Dieri tribe after a death occurs the people weep for hours and smear themselves with pipe clay. "As soon as the breath leaves the body of the sick man, the women and children leave the camp, the men pull down his hut so as to get at his body, and it is prepared for burial by being tied up. The great toes are fastened together, and the thumbs are secured behind the back; this they say is to prevent 'walking.' Eight men take the corpse on their heads, and the grave is filled, not with earth, but with wood in order to keep the dingo at bay. The space round the grave is carefully swept, and the camp is moved from its original situation, so as to evade the attentions of the spirit if it should happen to get back to its old haunts."<sup>2</sup>

Among other tribes the dead body is laid between the two piles of logs and duly roasted. When the skin is black all over, the master of the ceremonies draws longitudinal and transverse lines with chalk upon it, divides it with a knife along the lines from head to foot, separates the head from the trunk, and cuts every limb into pieces. Meantime the rest keep up a cannibalistic howling and give themselves deep wounds with their battle axes. Finally the divided portions are not eaten, but buried.

Many savage tribes can give a very detailed account of a future life, but the Australian does not seem to have been much concerned with eschatological problems. An exceptionally elaborate story has been obtained from the Wathi-Wathy on the Lower Murray. They say that the spirit starts for the sky when it leaves the body; another spirit gives it directions as to the road to be followed. There are two roads, one clean, the other dirty; the dirty one is the right one, for the other is only kept clean by bad spirits in the hope of tempting men to follow it. Then the *booki* meets a woman, who tries to seduce

<sup>1</sup> Thomas, "Native Races," pp. 192-193-195.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas, "Native Races," p. 196.

it; then two women with a skipping rope, the woman on the clean side being blind. Then on both roads, for they run parallel, is a deep pit, from which flames rise, but a good spirit can clear it at a jump. Two old women take care of him. Then the god Thathapuli comes to try the *booki*'s strength, and throws a *nulla-nulla* at a meteor, which is really an emu.

The Dieri thought that the spirit of a dead man could visit a sleeper. The latter reported his dream to the medicine-man; if he decided that it was a vision and not a mere dream, he would order a fire to be lighted at the grave and food to be left there. They also believe that when anyone dies, his spirit goes up to Piriwilpa, the sky; it can, however, roam about the earth.

There is a widespread belief among the natives that a dead black "jumps up white fellow"; that is probably not to be understood in the sense that the dead black is actually believed to return, but that he is re incarnated in the white. It has been suggested that the custom of taking off the skin of the dead was the origin of this belief, for when the epidermis is removed the body appears white; but the belief is found where the custom does not exist, and in the north it is the Malay and not the white man who is regarded as the dead black. A more natural explanation is given by an answer once given to a white man who inquired why they thought he was So-and-So, mentioning a dead black; and got as his answer that if he had not been black man once he would not have known the way to Australia.

**REGULATIVE ORGANIZATION.** The government of the Australian tribes is in the hands of a head man and a council made up of the older men of the tribe. Although something like hereditary chieftainship is found in a few tribes, it can hardly be said that the hereditary principle was generally recognized in Australia in deciding the headship of a tribe or local group. When there was a tendency to select the son of a late headman, it was modified by the rule that he must have shown himself worthy of the post by attaining distinction as a warrior, orator, or bard. Sometimes several qualifications were demanded of the chief. In the Yuin tribe he had to be a medicine-man, well stricken in years, able to speak several languages, skilful as a fighting man, and qualified to perform the feats of magic which the *Gommeras* (headmen) exhibited at the initiation ceremonies.

The council was composed of the heads of totems and local groups, fighting men, medicine-men, and generally speaking, of old men of standing and importance. This statement of Dr. Howitt's really seems to mean that all old men attend, for he goes on to say that the attendance at the Mindari ceremony, the final stage in the initiation rites of the Dieri, is the qualification for attendance at, and ultimately for speaking in, the council of men. The matters dealt with are procuring death by

magic, murder, breach of moral code, offences against tribal customs, revealing the secrets of this tribal council, or revealing to women the secrets of the initiation ceremonies.

The principal headman speaks first and after him the heads of totems. The manner of speaking is the repetition of broek sentences, uttered in an excited and almost frenzied manner, according to Mr. Gason. Those who are in agreement with the speaker repeat his sentences in a loud voice, but no one comments on the remarks until it is his turn to speak.

In some of the tribes the young men were allowed to stand around and listen to the deliberations, but not to talk or laugh, while they were going on. In the Yuin tribe the front line was assigned to the old men, the *Gommeras* having a place set apart for them; behind the old men were the young men, but they took little part in the proceedings.

The council takes charge of many cases of justice. When a man has been adjudged by the council to have killed someone by evil magic, an armed party, called a *pinya*, is sent out to kill him. The members of this are distinguished by their dress; they have a white band around the head, the point of the beard is tipped with human hair, and red and white stripes form conspicuous body markings. The men do not speak except to put questions as to the whereabouts of the condemned man; knowing the remorseless spirit of the *pinya*, the natives answer these without attempting concealment. When the deed is done, the *pinya* is broken up and each man returns to his home.

It is interesting to find that there is a form of peace making which may be substituted for the *pinya*; it consists of the interchange of goods by the relatives of the deceased and those on whom the guilt of blood might fall. Women bring the articles for barter, and these are handed to the members of the other party; if they are not satisfied, they argue, and then follows a regulated combat between all the men present.

An erring wife might be clubbed or speared through the leg on the spot by her husband, and no one would take much notice of the incident. Indeed, the injured husband might actually kill her, if he chose to sacrifice a valuable piece of property to an instinct of revenge; and the woman's kin would demand no satisfaction of her death, provided the offence were one for which there was a recognized right of inflicting punishment.



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE TASMANIANS.

**ENVIRONMENT.** "Tasmania, which was formerly known as Van Dieman's Land, is an island with an area of 26,375 square miles, situated at the eastern extremity of the south coast of Australia, from which it is separated by Bass's Straits. Its general character is mountainous, with numerous beautiful valleys, rendered fertile by numberless streams descending from the hills, and watering, in their course to the sea, large tracts of country. The southwestern district, washed by the Southern Ocean, is high and cold; but the climate of the northern and inland districts is one of the finest in the temperate zone and produces in abundance and variety all the fruits which are found under the same latitude in Europe.

**HISTORY.** "The island was discovered on the 24th of November, 1642, by Abel Jansen Tasman, who named it after the Governor of the Dutch East Indies, Anthony Van Dieman. It does not appear to have been visited by any European after Tasman until March, 1772, when Marion du Fresne, in command of a French expedition, spent some days in exploring the coast. A twelvemonth later it was visited by Captain Furneaux, in the *Resolution*, during his temporary separation from Captain Cook. The latter celebrated navigator visited the island in January, 1777. In the year 1798, Bass, first alone and then in company with Lieutenant Flinders, discovered and named Bass's Straits, and proved Tasmania to be an island. Captain Baudin visited the island in 1802, and the first European settlement was made the following year under the command of Lieutenant Bowen at Risdon. Before this time whalers had been in the habit of calling at the island, and we have evidence of such a visit as far back as the year 1791.

"The first aborigine killed was shot by one of Marion's party during a misunderstanding, and we have no record of any further fatal meeting between the aborigines and Europeans until 1804, about twelve months after the first European settlement was formed. On this occasion a panic seemed to have seized the English, who shot down unmercifully a party of aboriginal men, women, and children, which was approaching them with every sign of friendship. In 1828 the hostilities caused by this episode had reached such a pitch that the colonists were nearly driven out of the island; but the natives, never very numerous, were already rapidly decreasing in numbers, when, in 1835, the Black War came to an end by the unconditional surrender of a few hundred of the aborigines. This

wretched remnant, collected together by an energetic man named Robinson, was transferred to Flinders Island. But change of circumstances, and more especially unsuitable food, told woefully on their numbers, and when, twelve years later, these were reduced to something over forty, they were transferred to Oyster Cove, near Hobart. Here in March, 1869, William Lanney, the last Tasmanian male aborigine, died, and with the death in June, 1876, of the woman Truganina, or Lalla Rookh, the race was wiped off the face of the earth."<sup>1</sup>

Although these people have entirely passed away, a study of them here is important as showing the effect of the higher civilization upon the lower. It is not impossible that the fate of the Tasmanians will be the fate of many of the savage peoples who are either unwilling or unable to accept the principles of the higher civilization.

There seems to be a good deal of doubt on the part of students as to the origin of the Tasmanians, but on one thing nearly all are agreed—that they were not from the same stock as the Australians. Professor Flower, writing in 1878, says, "The view, then, that I am most inclined to adopt of the origin of the Tasmanians is that they are derived from the same stock as the Papuans or Melanesians; that they reached Van Dieman's Land, by way of Australia, long anterior to the commencement of the comparatively high civilization of those portions of the race still inhabiting New Guinea and the adjacent islands, and also anterior to the advent in Australia of the existing native race, characterized by their straight hair and by the possession of such weapons as the boomerang, throwing-stick, and shield, quite unknown to the Tasmanians. But these speculations on the relations, history, and migrations of the people who inhabit South-Eastern Asia and Australasia, require for their confirmation far more minute examination and comparison of their languages, customs, beliefs, and as I think, most important of all, their physical characters, than has yet been bestowed upon them."<sup>2</sup>

**PHYSIQUE.** The Tasmanians were, as a rule, about five feet six to eight inches high, with bodies frequently out of proportion. The head would be well developed, ample and fleshy shoulders, broad chest and very muscular buttocks, but extremities slender and weak, and a stomach proportionately much too big. Of those who made a study of these people the general impression seems to be that they possessed a very low type of physique and have been characterized as "a caricature of humanity." Another says, "They are in every respect the most destitute and wretched portion of the human family," and still another, "I should without hesitancy affirm that they

<sup>1</sup> H. Ling Roth, pp. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ling Roth, p. 218.

are a race of beings altogether distinct from ourselves, and class them amongst the inferior species of irrational animals.”<sup>1</sup>

These people clearly belonged to the black race, not only in so far as their color was concerned, but also as regards their other bodily features. The skull was dolichocephalic; the hair was black, crisp and woolly, growing in small corkscrew ringlets; the individual hairs were fine and in cross section elliptical or flattened form. “Upon this form depends the tendency to twist, and the kind of curliness which is seen in these small corkscrew locks. This peculiarity allowed them to load the hair with red ochre, and make it thus hang down in separate small ringlets of varying length. Such ringlets give a distinguishing character to all the correct portraits of the Tasmanians \* \* \* \* The Tasmanians had no deficiency of hair. They had whiskers, moustaches and beard; but all of the same slender character, inclined to twist into spiral tufts. On the borders of the whiskers there were little tufted pellets of hair, like pepper-corns upon the cheeks.”<sup>2</sup>

The amount of hair on the body distinguished them from the African negro, who has a comparatively small amount.

The eyes were small, the eyebrow ridges prominent, the nose flat and frequently upturned, the mouth wide, and the lips everted, although not to the extent of the negro; the jaw prognathous, and the chin receding. A very characteristic feature was the depression of the bone at the base of the nose which gave a singular resemblance to that of the orang-outang. The features of neither sex were prepossessing, being flat and ugly, especially after they passed middle age.<sup>3</sup>

These people were very clever with their feet, and could not only pick up things from the ground with their toes, but also carry articles in the same way. “When they wished to appear unarmed, they had a habit of walking without any weapon in their hands, but very adroitly trailing their spears after them, the point held in some manner between their great toe and that next it; this seems to be in order that they may have their waddy ready to heave at any small object that may appear. The spear is transferred from the foot to the hand in an instant.” It would appear that this stealthy carrying of arms is a warlike precaution, for Calder says “The Tasmanian aboriginal, in advancing on a victim whom he meant to kill, treacherously approached \* \* \* \* with his hands clasped and resting on the top of his head, a favourite posture of the black; \* \* \* \* but all the time he was dragging a spear behind him, held between his toes, in a manner that must have taken long to acquire. Then by a motion as unexpected as it was rapid, it was transferred to the hand, and the victim pierced

<sup>1</sup> Bonwick, “The Daily Life of the Tasmanians,” p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ling Roth (quoting from Barnard Davis, pp. 9-10), pp. 14-15.

<sup>3</sup> Ling Roth, p. 13.

before he could lift a hand or stir a step." The first white man, George Munday, who was killed by an aborigine, fell a victim to this practice; for the native had a spear concealed, and held by his toes, and as Munday turned from him, he caught up his spear and threw it at him.

In three qualities they surpassed the average Europeans; keenness of sight and hearing, and swiftness of foot; but in running they tired very soon, as their bodily strength was not great.

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** These people spent their time wandering from place to place, killing and eating as they went. They had no domesticated animals of any kind until the dog was introduced among them by the Europeans. They knew nothing of agriculture, even in its simplest form, but depended upon the roots, berries, and nuts which they could find in their wanderings. Of the animal foods the following formed the most important articles of diet: kangaroos, opossums, bandicotts, wombats, seals, stranded whales, birds, lizards, snakes, ants, grubs, and eggs. An occasional source of food has been mentioned by one writer. "These people are covered with vermin. We admired the patience of a mother, who was a long while employed in freeing one of her children from them; but we observed with disgust that, like most of the blacks, she crushed these filthy insects between her teeth, and then swallowed them."<sup>1</sup>

Cooking was of the simplest character, for they merely threw the meat into the fire, and kept it there until it was half broiled and then hauled it out and ate it. They knew nothing of the ovens which the natives of Australia possess, nor had they learned the art of boiling water by means of heated stones.

Because of the constant moving from place to place in search of food, the natives built neither huts nor villages. When they did need any protection from the cold or the weather, they put a few branches up against a tree, so that it would break the force of the wind. If they were to be for a few days in the place, a few sheets of bark thrown over the branches were all the protection that was thought necessary. Where houses of wood were built for them by the Europeans, they soon left them, for they enjoyed the roving life and could not bring themselves to the point of settling down.

**MARRIAGE.** The marriage system of the Tasmanians was very much simpler than that of the Australians. When a man wanted a wife, he either took her from some other tribe by force, or bargained for her if she were a member of his own tribe. A man could have more than one wife, but, as a rule, only two or three were taken at one time. Frequently the girl was promised from infancy to some friend of the family or to his son. "So long as she was unmated, she was the property

<sup>1</sup> La Billardiere, Vol. II, p. 55—quoted by Ling Roth, p. 123.

of her father or brothers. If freed from an engagement by the death of her betrothed, or the yielding of his rights, she was open to an offer, if made to, and approved of by her natural owners."<sup>1</sup>

The women were treated almost like slaves or beasts of burden and made to do all the work, both on the march and in the camp. During their wanderings, "while the men are taking it easy in front, the women follow at some short distance behind, sweltering under a load of one or two children on their backs, a couple of puppy dogs in their arms, and a variety of miscellaneous articles slung around them. The men are extremely selfish; if, after being short of food, one kills a kangaroo, he does not divide it with the others of the party, but, after his wife has cooked it, and taken her place behind his back, he satisfies himself with the choicest parts, handing her from time to time the half-devoured pieces over his shoulder; this he does with an air of the greatest condescension, without turning around."

"If a storm came on unexpectedly, the men would sit down while the women built huts over them, in which operation, as in all others as a menial nature, the men took no part."<sup>2</sup>

Infanticide was common, and it is to this, perhaps, more than to any other cause that we can place the final dying out of the Tasmanians. "The want of food for infants, the inconveniences of nomadic life, the interference with the personal charms of the wife, jealousies of other women, the arrest of their own pleasure, the disagreeables of baby life, and sometimes the desire of sparing a daughter the wretched lot of the future, were causes of infanticide. New-born infants were often buried alive with the deceased mother. Fathers, when enraged with their lubras<sup>3</sup> would occasionally snatch up and murder their child."<sup>4</sup>

As with most savage peoples, a man was not allowed to have anything to do with his mother-in-law. If he met her while out, he would avoid her by going into the bush. "A story is told of a man who was uncomfortable at the attentions of a gigantic bully in the tribe towards his gin, and who effectually warded off his jealousy by the engagement to give him for a future wife a newly-born daughter. The enamoured gentleman had thenceforth to keep his distance from the beautiful property."<sup>5</sup>

**CLOTHING AND ORNAMENTS.** The clothing worn by the natives during the warm part of the year was at a minimum. In winter they threw two or three opossum skins, fastened together, over their shoulders, but the rest of the

<sup>1</sup> Bonwick, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ling Roth, pp. 125-126.

<sup>3</sup> Lubras—women.

<sup>4</sup> Bonwick, p. 79.

<sup>5</sup> Bonwick, p. 80.

body was left quite uncovered. The amount of ornamentation was not great, for a strip or two of fur, a few flowers in the hair, and a string of beads or shells were all that they had. Like the Australians, they heavily scarred the body, especially the upper part. Both sexes daubed powdered charcoal and red ochre on the face and body, and they frequently drew patterns on their arms, legs and thighs. At times the paint mixed with grease was so thickly smeared over the body that it was impossible to see any skin, and as they seldom bathed, the effect produced on a foreigner coming near them was far from pleasant. The ochre and grease was plastered upon the hair until it became a stiff and tangled mop. Frequently they would so fix the hair that it hung around their heads in cork-screw curls, and for such an operation an entire morning would be spent.

**PLEASURES.** The amusements of these people were few and consisted for the most part of dancing and singing around their camp fires at night. Many of their performances were of an imitative character, and described by exact motions the action of animals, the hunting, fishing, and war expeditions, and the domestic life around the camp. "Another amusement of these male aborigines was the throwing of waddies and spears at grass stems set up as marks, which they frequently hit."<sup>1</sup> They also threw spears at each other and so dexterous did they become in dodging them, that they were seldom wounded. By a contortion of the body, a movement of the head to the right or left, or the raising of the leg or arm enabled them to escape shafts which would have certainly transfixed the less nimble European.<sup>2</sup>

**RELIGION.** According to most of those who made a study of the Tasmanians, they were without the idea of a supreme being who created and ruled the universe. Various missionaries who have investigated the subject say that these people possessed no creed or any form of religion and had no religious rites. But, they add, there was a dread of a malignant and destructive spirit, which was the predominant, if not the only feeling on the subject."<sup>3</sup> It is in this last statement that we find the key to the situation as we see below. Scientists who have visited and studied them from an unbiased point of view found that they believed in two spirits, a good one who governed the day, and a bad one who ruled at night. It was to the good one that they addressed their appeals, and when any of the family were away, they sang to it in order that the absent ones might have a successful journey and a safe return. Besides these two main spirits, they believed in a plurality of powerful, but generally evil-disposed beings, who inhabited

<sup>1</sup> Ling Roth, p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> Ling Roth, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Bonwick, pp. 171-172.

crevices and caverns of rocky mountains, and who had temporary abodes in hollow trees and solitary valleys. Of these spirits a few were supposed to be of great power, but the majority had the nature usually attributed to goblins and elves.

That they believed in a future life we see from the fact that they thought the spirits of their departed friends and relatives returned to bless or injure them. In order to avoid possible harm they wore around their necks as an amulet, the bones of some near kin. The evidence is very slight to prove that they believed in otherworldliness.<sup>1</sup> Most travellers say that nothing in the way of tools, weapons, or food was left on the grave, but the statement of one native, who said, in regard to a spear, which was stuck in a single grave, "That is to fight with when he is asleep," leads us to believe that perhaps they did think of the next world as a place where the things of this life would be needed.

**DEATH AND BURIAL.** There were two ways of disposing of the dead. One was to burn the body, and the other was to place it in a hollow tree. A cremation is described as follows: "One of the women died. The men formed a pile of logs and at sunset placed the body of the woman upon it, supported by small wood, which concealed her, and formed a pyramid. They then placed their sick people around the pile, at a short distance. On A. Cottrell, our informant, inquiring the reason of this, they told him the dead woman would come in the night and take the 'devil' out of them. At daybreak the pile was set on fire, and fresh wood added as any part of the body became exposed, till the whole was consumed. The ashes of the dead were collected in a kangaroo skin, and every morning, before sunrise, till they were consumed, a portion of them was smeared over the faces of the survivors, and a death song sung, with great emotion, tears clearing away lines among the ashes. The store of ashes, in the meantime, was suspended about one of their necks."<sup>2</sup>

If the ashes were not treated in this way, they were piled on the ground in some quiet spot, and over them was built a bark hut. There were apparently no funeral rites which had in them a religious significance.

They never spoke of the dead. "In fact it was a settled custom in every tribe, upon the death of any individual, most scrupulously to abstain ever after from mentioning the name of the deceased—a rule, the infraction of which would, they considered, be followed by some dire calamities: they therefore used great circumlocution in referring to a dead person, so as to void pronounciation of the name—if, for instance, William

<sup>1</sup> Otherworldliness—a belief that the life in the future world is a continuation of the life on this earth.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ling Roth, p. 132.

and Mary, man and wife, were both deceased, and Lucy, the deceased sister of William, had been married to Isaac, also dead, whose son Jemmy still survived, and they wished to speak of Mary, they would say, 'the wife of the brother of Jemmy's father's wife,' and so on."<sup>1</sup>

**REGULATIVE ORGANIZATION.** The ruling power, at least during war, was in the hands of that man who could assume and hold the authority by force. There is no evidence to show that the rule was inherited, nor was it elective. The degree of distinction in which any native was held by his fellows, or the amount of deference that was paid to his opinions depended upon his personal strength, courage, energy, prudence, skill, and other similar qualifications.<sup>2</sup> During the times of peace the war chiefs retired to the quietude of everyday forest life. There is no evidence to show that they were ever in the habit of meeting in council to discuss matters concerning the tribes. The hunting territory of each group was clearly marked, and these boundaries were, under ordinary circumstances, respected, but should they be broken, a war ensued.

On the whole the Tasmanians were a peace-loving people and would probably be in existence to-day, if the white race had not come into such forcible contact with them. These latter killed off a great number of the black fellows merely for sport, and one traveler recounts hunting expeditions which went out from the settlements with the idea of "bagging" as many natives as possible. "A friend once described to me a fearful scene at which he was present. A number of blacks, with the women and children, were congregated in a gully near town \* \* \* \* and the men had formed themselves into a ring round a large fire, while the women were cooking the evening meal of opossums and bandicoots; they were surprised by a party of soldiers, who, without giving warning, fired upon them as they sat, and rushing up to the scene of slaughter, found there wounded men and women, and a little child crawling near its dying mother. The soldier drove his bayonet through the body of the child, and pitchforked it into the flames. 'It was only a child,' he said! It is stated also that it was a favorite amusement to hunt the aborigines; that a day would be selected, and the neighboring settlers invited, with their families to a picnic \* \* \* \* After dinner, all would be gaiety and merriment, whilst the gentlemen of the party would take their guns and dogs, and, accompanied by two or three convict servants, wander through the bush in search of black fellows. Sometimes they would return without sport; at others they would succeed in killing a woman, or, if lucky, mayhap a man or two \* \* \* \* As the white settler spread

<sup>1</sup> H. Ling Roth, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> Bonwick, p. 81.



his possessions over the island—over the natives' favourite camping-grounds, driving away their kangaroos and replacing them with bullocks and sheep—the natives objected in their own way to the inroad. In many cases, no doubt, the blacks were sacrificed to momentary caprice or anger, and suffered much wrong. Indeed, one of the Governor's proclamations states, that cruelties had been perpetrated repugnant to humanity and disgraceful to the British people."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ling Roth, pp. 170-171, quoting Hull, "The Aborigines of Tasmania." (MSS. in Royal Colonial Institute).

## CHAPTER X.

### MELANESIANS.

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT.** Melanesia is a group of islands lying in the tropical zone to the north and northeast of Australia; and includes New Guinea, Fiji, the New Hebrides, the Solomon Islands, the Santa Cruz group, the Banks' Islands, New Caledonia, and the Loyalty Islands. A large number of these islands are of volcanic origin and even to-day there are numerous active volcanoes situated on them. Because of this fact the people live near the sea coast and are therefore a fishing and trading people. Even on the larger island of New Guinea, which has an easily accessible interior, a great majority of the population are seafaring people. As in Australia there are no large wild animals, although the tusked hog, the cassowary, the wallaby, the tree kangaroo, the opossum and the alligator are found in many of the islands.

**PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CHARACTERS.** The Melaneseans belong to the black race. The skull is dolichocephalic. The hair of the head, which is long and very curly, is a source of great pride to the people. They arrange it in enormous perukes which stand far out from the head so that they have been given the name "mop-heads." The people of Southern New Guinea have been called Papuans, which, being translated, means "frizzle-haired". So much time is spent in combing, cutting, and decorating the hair that they do not take it down at night, and so, like the Chinese, they have special curved sleeping stools for their heads so that their coiffures will not be disturbed. There is a good deal of hair on the face and on the body, although it is not as abundant as that of the Australians. The chief physical distinctions from the African negroes lies in the fact that on the skulls of the males the ridges above the eye-sockets are generally very well developed, instead of this region being nearly flat. Usually the nose is narrower and more prominent than that of the negro, especially in New Guinea and the neighboring islands, while the skull itself is, as a rule, higher and narrower, although some skulls are essentially African in character. Many of the people have a flat receding forehead, but this is largely due to artificial binding when the individuals are young, in order that a certain type of beauty may be acquired.

In many respects the Melaneseans are more savage in their disposition than are the Australians. It has been said of them that they are "frightfully barbarous and blood-thirsty, cowardly, revengeful, proud to the uttermost, and much given

to lying; which bad qualities are most conspicuous in the Fijians, the most advanced of them all." They are a great deal inferior to the Polynesians and to the Malays, and occupy, as it were, a depression in the level of culture between these two peoples, retaining much which among the others has already become obsolete. "The Melanesian is more impulsive, more frank, noisier, more violent than the Polynesian. A casual utterance will cause a woman to sit down in the public place of a village, shed tears without end and fill the air with lamentations and a flood of scolding and threatening language. The cry will be heard from the top of a hill, 'War! War! Will no man kill me that I may go to the shade of my father?' All rush to the spot and find a man in the depths of grief because his friend has cut off a yard or two from a piece of bark cloth belonging to them in common. Suicide is not unknown."

Revenge may form the most important duty in life for a Melanesian. If a man is injured he puts up a stick or a stone where he cannot help but see it, to keep him constantly in mind of the duty of revenge. If a man abstains from food or keeps away from the dance it is a bad sign for his enemies. The man who goes about with his head half-shaved, or, in addition to this, allows a long twisted bunch of hair to hang down his back, is thinking of revenge. Sometimes a bundle of tobacco hangs from the gable of his house, which is only to be smoked over the corpse of an enemy, or the bloody clothes of a slain relation preserve the memory of an unatoned deed. Nor is there any lack of friends to keep a man reminded of his duty, with songs either lamenting or censuring. Open violence is not the only means of appeasing revenge. Hired assassins are employed, or magical devices with sticks, leaves, or reeds, are adopted. A dead man often takes a whole generation with him; his wives are throttled, and his mother often shares the same fate. Treacherous and bloodthirsty acts, such as have earned a bad reputation for the Solomon Islanders in particular, may often be referred only to revenge for some injustice suffered.

If the natives of New Guinea desire vengeance on the inhabitants of a neighbouring village, the warriors start out in their canoes, yelling and shouting as they go. If the attack is successful and the killing and plundering abundant, they return to their canoes with hilarious jubilation, dancing and drum-beating.

"Then the wretched captives' palms are pierced, a string passed through the holes and the hands tied together at the back. On the return voyage they are jeered at and taunted with the prospect of torture, and when the flotilla arrives they are thrown into the water and fished out by those on the beach, sticking barbed spears into the less vulnerable fleshy parts, the use of hands being barred by custom. In the village they are

put on mats, a rope secured to a tree is passed round their necks to make them sit with head erect, and their hands held down, while the nearest female relative of the man to be avenged steps forward armed with a sharp-pointed stick. 'Is it with this right eye,' she asks, 'that you have seen my son (or brother, etc.), captured? Is it with this right eye you saw him cut to pieces, cooked and eaten? Well, this is the payment for it,' thrusting the stick into his right eye. All the other female relatives then follow, each in her turn inflicting some fresh but not deadly gash, after which he is wrapped in dry cocoanut leaves, hoisted some six feet from the ground, and slowly roasted with firesticks. When the rope by which the body is hung is burnt and the body falls to the ground the wildest and most savage scene takes place. The natives rush with knives in their hands, each slashing a piece off the body, which may be still alive, in the midst of diabolical noise and yells of rejoicing."<sup>1</sup>

**INDUSTRIAL LIFE. FISHING.** In the industrial life of the people, fishing holds the most important place. This is carried on from boats by means of nets, which in New Guinea are often 500 yards long and require hundreds of men to handle them; by hooks made from birds' bones, tortoise shell, sea shells, and hard wood, and fitted with artificial bait made from feathers or bright pieces of shell. Those used for sharks are sometimes 20 inches long. In New Caledonia and Western Melanesia fishing is done entirely with arrows, spears, and nets.

**BOAT BUILDING.** The people of Melanesia have become very skilful in navigation and in the construction of their boats. A great number of their canoes are made out of hollow tree trunks and even their large sailing canoes, which will hold 40 men, are made from a single log. These latter are not only dug out, but the sides are also built up and decks laid with planks tied on. Most of these boats, whether propelled by sails or paddles, have outriggers which enable them to go out in rough weather without fear of being capsized.

The larger boats of New Guinea are from 16 to 20 feet long, and from 2 to 2½ wide. The hull, made in one piece, is hollowed out from a trunk which must have no flaw. It is not more than half an inch thick, and has cross-ties to keep it from warping. Both ends curve upwards and are strengthened with wooden posts, of which that in the stem rises high and is adorned with arabesques, or painted. To raise the gunwale above the water line they employ the ribs of sago-palm leaves. These are by preference interlaced, and then being attached like tiles to the cross-ties, form a water-tight surface. Over the gunwale are fastened two light cross-pieces, which

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Lamberto Loria, Official Report, 1895, Appendix S, pp. 44 ff. Keane, "Man Past and Present," p. 133.

project about 5 feet, and at the end of which is another piece of wood, bent at right angles, just touching the surface of the water, and sticking into a strong boom, which is as light as cork and serves as a float. Amidships on the cross-timbers a square cabin of bamboo is erected, sheltered against injury from weather by a small roof of coco-palm leaves. All other kinds of craft, from the raft upward, are found in New Guinea. The ornamentation, especially that of the war-canoes, is rich.

After a big war canoe is finished, a feast is held at which as many as a hundred pigs may be killed. In order to have it dedicated properly they try to get a human victim. In the Eastern Solomon Islands, if no victim is met with on the first trip of the new canoe, the chief, who owns the canoe, secretly arranges with some nearby chief to let him have one of his men—some friendless man, probably, or a stranger—would then be killed as he went out to look at the new canoe. It was thought a kind thing to come behind and strike him without warning. Further west, captives were kept with a view to taking their heads when new canoes were launched.<sup>1</sup>

In these larger boats the people are able to travel many hundreds of miles. They go on these long journeys either for the purpose of falling upon the inhabitants of neighboring islands and getting heads for their canoe houses, or in order to meet on some appointed day of the year for an exchange of goods.

**AGRICULTURE.** Although the Melanesians are largely a fishing and trading people, yet agriculture is not neglected. The chief articles raised are the yam, the bread fruit, the banana, and the coco-nut palm. The cultivation of these is carried on in fields that are fenced in, that have irrigation ditches, and that are carefully weeded. At the time of the harvest of the yams a great feast is held, often lasting for days, to which are invited people from the surrounding country. The time is taken up with singing, dancing, eating, and drinking. After the feast is over, the rest of the yam harvest is stored away in a house where the fruit will often keep for two years.

**CANNIBALISM.** Cannibalism, although existing on some of the islands, is now largely a thing of the past. Where it is practiced, men killed in battle are eaten by the victors; and if there is an abundance, the meat is even sold in the market. However, to kill for the purpose of eating human flesh, though not unknown, is rare. In the New Hebrides, after a bitter fight a slain enemy is eaten as a sign of rage and indignation; he is cooked in an oven as is a pig and then each member of the tribe eats a portion of him.

**COOKING.** In cooking the food, the people of Melanesia

<sup>1</sup> Codrington, "The Melanesians," p. 297.

differ from all other peoples of Oceania in that many of them possess pottery. Those who have not acquired this art, boil water in wooden bowls by dropping into them red hot stones. One method of cooking meat is to lay it between hot stones, but a more effective way is to sprinkle water over the stones, put the food on, and then cover the whole thing with leaves and clay. The result is that the meat is thoroughly steamed. Many of the tribes have a permanent oven dug in the ground and lined with stones that will bear great heat. A fire is lighted in the hole by rubbing two sticks together and many extra stones are then put in. When it has burnt down, these latter stones are taken out with wooden tongs, and the food is wrapped in leaves and placed inside, hot stones are placed between the larger bundles and the rest of the hot stones piled on top. The whole is shut in with leaves or earth, and water, either salt or fresh, is poured on to make steam. This method of cooking, which takes a good part of the day, is carried on by the men.

**WEAPONS AND FIGHTING.** Of the weapons used in the hunt and in the fight the spear is the most common, although the bow and arrow is used on all of the islands. At the time of a fight the men carry shields to ward off the enemies' spears. A fight among these people is not a very serious affair, for if they come together in the open, the battle begins and ends in a series of duels. Even where they fight with bows, an open battle is not common. There is much shouting of defiance, cursing, abuse, and boasting, stamping with the heel, and grasping of the ground with the toes, which is a marked sign of valor; but when the first blood is shed, the battle is over.

The arrow is supposed to have certain magical power because the head is, as a rule, made from a human bone. The maker sings or mutters charms as he ties the bone to the shaft, expecting thereby to get the help of the man whose bones he is using in making the wound fatal. Not long ago there was a man on Leper's Island who because of love for his dead brother dug up his body and made arrows from his bones. With these he went about speaking of himself as "I and my brother"; all were afraid of him, for they believed that his dead brother was at hand to help him.<sup>1</sup>

**WOUNDS.** If a man is wounded by one of these charmed arrows and part of it has been left in the wound, it is extracted by means of leaf poultices, and is kept in a damp place or on cool leaves. They think that the result will be favorable to the injured man and that the inflammation will go down. Shells, over which incantations have been sung, are hung from the roof of the house where the wounded man lies, with the expectation that their rattling will keep off the hostile ghosts. The man who has done the injury has by no means finished

<sup>1</sup> Codrington, p. 309.

his work. "He and his friends will drink hot and burning juices, and chew irritating leaves; pungent and bitter herbs will be burnt to make an irritating smoke; a bundle of leaves known to the shooter, or bought from a wizard, will be tied upon the bow that sent the arrow, to secure a fatal result; the arrow head, if recovered, will be put into the fire; the bow will be kept near the fire to make the wound it has inflicted hot, or, as in Lepers' Island, will be put into a cave haunted by a ghost; the bow-string will be kept taut and occasionally pulled, to bring on tension of the nerves and the spasms of tetanus to the wounded man."<sup>1</sup>

**HOUSES.** Most of the houses are built on piles, probably for protection from enemies and animals. In some localities they are situated out in the water, the connection with the shore being made by means of a long gangway, which can be pulled in when necessary. The side walls and floor are formed of split bamboos which have been flattened and interlaced. The roof is made of interwoven grasses and leaves. Frequently an entire land village, consisting of about fifty houses, will be up in the air, and it is possible to go from one house to another without descending to the ground. The houses are in many cases so large that several families can live in a single one, and if a man has many wives, each will have a small house to herself within the big one. In New Guinea, huts large enough to hold twelve people are fastened to the branches of big trees, 80 to 100 feet above the ground. The stem below is stripped of all unnecessary branches and then made perfectly smooth. The entrance to the hut is made by ladders of bamboo, which can be pulled up after the occupants have safely reached the top. At the foot of the tree is another hut which is used during the daytime, the upper one being used only at night, or in case of sudden attack.

**FURNITURE.** The furniture for these houses is of the simplest character. Boards covered with a mat form the bed. The hearth is made of basket work with a layer of earth in it. Long pieces of bamboo, with the joints piereed for holding water, sacks of matting, javelins, bows, arrows, and spears all have their appointed places. There are also to be found pieces of pottery and wooden bowls which are used in cooking. Most of the houses are very elaborately carved with figures of men and animals. In this art the Melanesians are very skilful, and display their talent on practically all the tools and implements which can conveniently be so treated.

**MARRIAGE.** Marriage takes place among the Melanesians at a very early age. It frequently happens that a man with a son born to him will wait for the birth of a suitable girl to be his son's wife. This is especially true among the more wealthy members of the population, where payments and negotiations

<sup>1</sup> Codrington, p. 310.

begin at birth and last until the marriage is finally consummated. "When little children have been betrothed, the girl, still very young, comes bringing her food with her to spend a month or two in her future father-in-law's house, and to become acquainted with the family. The betrothed children converse and play together at their ease, knowing what is proposed; and this visit is repeated while the children are little, from time to time, and part of the money, porpoise teeth and dogs' teeth, to be paid to the girl's father, is handed over. In consequence of this familiarity, when the girl is marriageable and all is arranged, she goes willingly enough to take up her abode in her new family without any real or affected reluctance on her part, or lifting or carrying by her friends. It is sometimes, however, a long time before the marriage is consummated, through the shyness of the bridegroom, though the parents encourage the young couple to be friendly, and give them opportunities of talking and working together."<sup>1</sup>

Frequently it is necessary that the girl be tattooed when she reaches a marriageable age. This is done by a professional man who is paid for services in pigs and other goods. When this is finished, the father of the boy knows that it is time for him to make the final payment on his son's wife.

When the marriage day arrives, a ceremony is held in the center of the village. The groom and his parents provide a feast for the bride and her friends and an orator tells him to feed her well, treat her kindly, and not to be sulky with her. The bride, attired in a new petticoat and wrapped in a new mat, is then handed over to the groom. In some cases where there has not been such close intimacy during childhood, a sham fight takes place between the relatives of the bride and groom. After it is over, the bride is escorted to the house of the groom, or of his father; and the marriage ceremony is completed.

**RELATION OF THE SEXES.** Before marriage the relationship between the two sexes is very free, and unchastity is not seriously regarded. However, in some of the islands there are a great many professional women, who, after they have collected a fortune, are eligible for marriage, and even girls of the better class provide themselves with a dowry by selling their favors. It frequently happens that daughters of wealthy parents are kept strictly chaste and should they break over the moral taboo, they are placed in the class of common prostitutes. On the other hand adultery is very seriously punished. The man, if he is caught, is either put to death or made to pay a heavy fine. The wife is either dismissed, or the chief takes her and makes her earn money for him. If adultery occurs among the lower classes, the friends of both sides will fight about the damages to be exacted. It is from this cause that

<sup>1</sup> Codrington, pp. 238-239.



most of the fights on the islands originate. Divoree is easy and common and may take place at the will of either party. One great deterrent is that the property paid for a wife is not returned. If it is desired on both sides, the father of the woman will pay back her original price.

A man may have more than one wife, and the ceremonies and payment for all after the first, are slight. It is the duty of a man to take over his deceased brother's wives and add them to his own, in order that the property may not be lost by some other man taking them. Cases have been known where a man has had sixty wives, but the average man is perfectly contented with two. However, as a man advances in years, there tend to collect about him the widows of his maternal uncles, his brothers, and his cousins, so that he becomes, in name, at least, the unhappy husband of a host of female relations.

**ABORTION AND INFANTICIDE.** Abortion and infanticide are common in all classes of society. The old women frequently determine whether a new-born child shall live, and if it is not promising in appearance, or is likely to be troublesome, or is of the wrong sex, its mouth is stuffed with leaves, or perhaps it is thrown into a hole and stones put in on top of it. On the Banks' Islands male children are killed rather than female, for the latter will bring in a good sum of money when sold in marriage. Twins are looked upon with favor, although among many savage peoples either one or both are killed.

**INITIATION OF BOYS.** When the age of puberty arrives, the boy is initiated into the tribe as a man. Up to this period he has lived at home with his mother and sisters, but now he must leave them, and go to eat and sleep in the men's club house. His intercourse with his mother and sisters becomes very reserved. "He must not use as a common noun the word which is the name, or makes part of the name, of any of them, and they avoid his name as carefully. He may go to his father's house to ask for food, but if his sister is within, he has to go away before he eats. If no sister is there, he can sit down near the door and eat. If by chance brother and sister meet in the path, she runs away or hides. If a boy on the sands knows that certain footsteps are his sister's, he will not follow them, nor she his. This mutual avoidance begins when the boy is clothed, or the girl tattooed, and continues through life. The reserve between son and mother increases as the boy grows up, and is much more marked on her side than his. He goes to the house and asks for food. When his mother brings it, she does not give it to him, but puts it down for him to take. If they talk together, she sits at a little distance and turns away, for she is shy of her grown-up son."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Codrington p. 232.

**CLOTHING.** The clothing is of the simplest character and for the most part consists of a loin cloth, made from leaves, grasses, or bark cloth, hammered out of the bark of the paper mulberry. Peschel has said that the amount of clothing worn by men varies inversely as the darkness of the skin, and hence we are not surprised to find that the clothing of these people is left almost entirely to the imagination. The body is often tattooed, but not with the elaborate designs which appear among the Polynesians. They follow the Australians in this respect, by deeply scarring the skin chiefly for religious reasons. Shells, bones, and teeth are used in great profusion for ornamentation. These are worn not only around the neck, but are also placed in perforations made in the ears, lips, and nose.

**SELF-GRATIFICATION.** The chief amusement of these people is dancing. Often large groups of men will wander from island to island giving exhibitions of their ability along this line. They wear elaborate costumes, and their hair is dressed with great care. The dance is accompanied by the song and by the noise of the drum and a sort of flute, or pan-pipes made from stems of the bamboo. In their hands the dancers have castanets of shells and around their ankles and wrists rattles of nuts and seeds.

Of their games, football, which is played much like the Rugby game, is the most enjoyable, although hurling spears at one another and dodging them is also an important sport. The children play hide-and-seek, fly kites, and spin tops much as do those of a more civilized community.

**RELIGION.** The religion of these people is, in many respects, similar to that of other savages living on the same stage of culture. "Their mind is entirely possessed by the belief in a supernatural power or influence, called almost universally *mana*. This is what works to effect everything which is beyond the ordinary power of man, outside the common processes of nature. It is present in the atmosphere of life, attaches itself to persons and to things, and is manifested by results which can only be ascribed to its operation. When one has got it, he can use and direct it, but its force may break forth at some new point. The presence of it is ascertained by proof. A man comes by chance upon a stone which takes his fancy; its shape is singular; it is like something; it is certainly not a common stone; there must be a *mana* in it. So he argues with himself and he puts it to the proof; he lays it at the root of a tree to the fruit of which it has a certain resemblance, or he buries it in the ground when he plants his garden; an abundant crop on the tree or in the garden shows that he is right, the stone is *mana*, has that power in it."<sup>1</sup> This universal animation of everything does not mean that the spirits are necessarily good, and many of the ills of life are ascribed to their male-

<sup>1</sup> Codrington, pp. 118-119.

volent influence. Most of the religious rites of the people consist in obtaining this *mana*, or deriving benefit from it, either through prayers or sacrifice. "The other world can become practically effective for the living, either through the mediation of departed souls which wander between heaven and earth, or by the entry, whether temporary or permanent, of a god into an earthly object. In this way, the tutelary spirits, who are extraordinarily important in the practical service of the gods, came into existence."<sup>1</sup>

"The Melanesians believe in the existence of beings personal, intelligent, full of *mana*, with a certain bodily form which is visible, but not fleshly like the body of man. These they think to be more or less actively concerned in the affairs of men, and they invoke and otherwise approach them. These may be called spirits; but it is most important to distinguish between spirits who are beings of an order higher than mankind, and in the disembodied spirits of men, which have become, in the vulgar sense of the word, ghosts."<sup>2</sup>

"There is no priestly order, and no persons who can properly be called priests. Any man can have access to some object of worship, and most men in fact do have it, either by discovery of their own, or by knowledge imparted to them by those who have before employed it. If the object of worship, as in some sacrifices, is one common to the members of a community, the man who knows how to approach that object is in a way their priest and sacrifices for all of them; but it is in respect to that particular function only that he has a sacred character; and it is very much by virtue of that function that a man is a chief, and not at all because he is chief that he performs the sacrifice. Women and children generally are excluded from religious rites. In close connection with religious observances come the various practices of magic and witchcraft, of doctoring and weather-doctoring, for all is done by the aid of ghosts and spirits."<sup>3</sup>

**DEATH AND BURIAL.** After a man is dead, his ghost is supposed to have greater power and force than the man had during life. Hence the people have the utmost desire to keep on the right side of the recently dead, especially if the person was a prominent member of the community. "The souls of old chiefs are deified after their death, and invoked by name with sacrifices. A certain gradation is imported into this troop of spirits and souls by the distinctions of rank which prevailed among their former earthly tabernacles. For this reason the destiny of the souls of chiefs and priests which have quitted the earth is materially higher than that of the lower classes, since even in life the former were inhabited by higher powers,

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, "History of Mankind," Vol. I, p. 300.

<sup>2</sup> Codrington, "Melanesians," p. 120.

<sup>3</sup> Codrington, p. 127.

and these will have a yet more powerful effect when freed from the bodily husk. Since the souls of chiefs go to the stars, while others wait upon or within the earth, the stars are designated simply as the souls of the departed. As these take their way upward in the darkness they are of course easily seized and dragged about by evil spirits.”<sup>1</sup>

“No sooner has the soul left the body than it enters upon its wandering, which ends in various ways, according to its rank and deserts. At first it does not go far away, and by a combination of forces can often be recalled; to which end the relations round the death-bed call out, loud and impressively, the name of the departing. It is believed that immediately after death the soul can be recaptured. In one dirge, the dead man’s wife calls upon him as a bird, which flies ever farther to its home and its adopted parent.”<sup>1</sup>

“Great variety prevails in modes of interment. In the west the body is kept at hand as long as possible; and at least portions of it, especially the skull, and above all, the lower jaw, are prepared for permanent preservation. On the Maclay coast of New Guinea the corpse has usually to be dried before the fire in the hut. In other islands it is hung up in mats between the branches of trees until the soft parts have decayed away, after which it is laid symmetrically with other skeletons in a cave on the seashore. Children’s bodies are merely hung up in a basket under the roof. Burial within the hut is customary in Fiji. Among the Motus of Port Moresby the only sign of mourning is the incessant beating of drums for three days. When this is over, the grave is dug in front of the house, the dead body laid in a mat, and a little hut built over the grave. After a time the grave is opened, the corpse taken out and smeared on the elbows and knees with red ochre, while the widow smears herself with the decaying flesh. Then the dead man is put by again, and the little sepulchral house is gradually pulled to pieces, so that no trace of the grave is left. All these proceedings are accompanied by carousals.”<sup>2</sup>

Sometimes the dead man’s wife and child are dragged to the open grave where they are killed and thrown in, together with his possessions, such as guns, money and household treasures. Often at the time of the funeral the bread-fruit trees and the coco-nut trees which belonged to him are cut down, not because they think the things go to the other world to be of use to him there, but out of respect.<sup>3</sup>

“The practice of burying alive is widely extended; it was extensively used as a means of infanticide, but old and sick people sought of their own free will to be buried. In the case of new-born children a fire was lighted over the grave to

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. I, p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> Ratzel, Vol. I, p. 328.

<sup>3</sup> Codrington, p. 263.

stifle the soul. In Vate, when old people are to be buried alive, a pig is tied to their arm, which is afterwards consumed at the feast and accompanies the soul into the next world. In the Fiji Islands it is also customary to strangle, and the cord is regarded there as a great kindness in comparison with the club. If a chief in the Solomon Islands dies, his wives are strangled in their sleep; it would be a shame for them, and an insult to the dead man's memory, if they were to marry men of lower rank. The same end is frequently allotted to the wives or nearest relations of an ordinary man; even in death he must be surrounded by those who love him. In Anaiteum the women are said to wear the ominous cord round their necks from their wedding day.<sup>1</sup>

The abode of the dead is thought to be above ground on some distant island, although in some places the soul follows the sun into the ocean, in order to reach the next world. In most cases the future life is a continuation of the life on this earth. The children-ghosts tease the elder ghosts and are banished to a second island; the chief builds his house and his boats; the men and women plant and reap in the fields; and finally they pass out of this ghost life into white ants' nests, when the people on this earth forget them, and turn to worship some of the more recently dead, and when no sacrificial food is offered.<sup>2</sup>

**REGULATIVE ORGANIZATION.** The government of the Melanesians is of the simplest character. The form is not tribal and hence there can be no political structure held together by the authority of tribal chiefs. What power they have rests upon the belief in their supernatural intercourse with ghosts and spirits. The petty rulers which do exist hold sway both during war and peace. They direct the common operations and industries, preside at sacrifices, inflict fines, and order people put to death. The people work in their gardens and build homes and canoes for them. Each little ruler has about him a number of young men, who of their own volition have joined themselves to him and who carry out his commands.

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, Vol. I, p. 330.

<sup>2</sup> Codrington, p. 261.

## CHAPTER XI.

### NEGRITOS.

**CLASSIFICATION AND HISTORY.** The Negritos may be divided into five branches, separated by great distances of land and water, yet each bearing so close a relationship to the others that we may consider them under a single head. These are the dwarfish inhabitants of Central Africa, the Andaman Islands, the Malay Peninsula, Philippines, and part of New Guinea.

There is little known of the early history of these people or how they came to be so distantly separated, but various theories have been advanced to account for this dispersing. Keane has advanced a suggestion which is perhaps as near the truth as any of them. Let us suppose that the original home of the negro group was the Indo-Austral region which is now flooded by the Indian Ocean. "But before, or simultaneously with, the subsidence of the land, its human inhabitants gradually withdrew westwards to Africa, northeastwards to India and Malaysia, eastwards to South Australia and Tasmania and later to New Zealand. Thus from the remotest times were constituted by easy and natural migrations the various Negro groups in those regions on both sides of the Indian Ocean, where they have always dwelt, and where they are still found, generally in association with allied anthropoid apes. Perhaps the strongest argument for the original unity of all these groups, now separated by a great marine basin, is afforded by the fact that the two main sections, the African and Oceanic, comprise two distinct types, the tall Negro and the dwarfish Negrito. As the Negrito appears to represent the primitive stock, from which the Negro diverged later, such a parallelism cannot be regarded as a mere coincidence.

"Here the parent stem, after throwing off the two great African and Indo-Oceanic branches to the right and left (west and east), soon dies out, submerged, as it were, by the rising waters of the Indian Ocean. That the Negrito branches, from which the Negro proper is seen to break away at an early date in both regions, stand nearest to the primitive human type, seems self-evident. It would also appear that the western (African) branch has on the whole preserved more of the original characters than has the eastern (Indo-Oceanic). Both no doubt present in certain groups (Akka, Sakai) an equal degree of prognathism, as well as an equally Simian expression, combined with the normally brachycephalic crania. But the African alone shows the original yellowish complexion, the reddish-brown woolly head, the somewhat hairy body and the extremely

low stature, ranging from about 3 ft. 4 in. to a little under 5 ft. Few of the Malaysians fall much below 4 ft. 6 in., while some, such as the Andamanese, rather exceed 5 ft. The color also is described as deep brown or blackish, so that it is not always easy to distinguish between the true Negritos and the Negroes (Papuan, Melanesians) of Oceania whereas in Africa no doubt ever arises."<sup>1</sup>

The African pigmies or Negritos were recognized in early historical times, for not only did Aristotle, Herodotus, and the Homeric Singers speak of them, but also their introduction into Egypt during the First Empire is noted. Figures of them, carefully sculptured on the tombs in bas-relief, faithfully reproduce their racial characters. It is recorded in a hieroglyphic inscription that "to him come pigmies of Niam-Niam from the Southern Lands to serve in his household."

## AFRICAN NEGritos.

**PHYSICAL CHARACTERS.** The height of these people averages about four feet, they have a yellowish-brown complexion, dolichocephalic head, and short kinky hair which is scarce on the face and body. The maxillary angle shows a great degree of prognathism, and the supraorbital ridges are visible. The lips are thick and everted, and the nose is flat, broad, and depressed at the root. Hands and feet are small, fingers long and narrow, and the nails relatively large.

**LIFE CONDITIONS.** These Negritos live in the forests of Central Africa. They are entirely a hunting people, moving from place to place in search for game. "In the chase they bound through the tall herbage like grass-hoppers, attacking the elephant and even the buffalo with their tiny arrows and darts."<sup>2</sup> They become so skilful in the use of their bow and arrows that they will shoot three or four arrows, one after the other, with such rapidity that the last will have left the bow before the first has reached its goal. If a man misses his mark he will fly into such a violent passion that he is likely to break his bow and arrows.

"Fully occupied in hunting, Pigmies do not cultivate the soil, and for this reason, among others, as is the case with the Eskimo, they stand low in the scale of civilization. Skilful trappers and hunters, they can kill even elephants with their bows and arrows, blinding the animal first by shooting at his eyes. Once he is blind, they never leave him till he falls.

"They are remarkably clever fishermen. With a morsel of meat tied to a piece of string, and without the aid of a hook,

<sup>1</sup> Keane's "Ethnology," pp. 242-245.

<sup>2</sup> Keane's, "Ethnology," p. 248.

they will succeed in landing heavy fish, while less-skilled fishermen, with hooks and lines, may not be able to secure one.

"As a rule the Pigmies take up their abode near a village of some big chief, where they are sure of finding large banana plantations. Though they grow no food of any kind on their own account, they are extremely fond of the unripe long banana, and their method of obtaining this delicacy is simple. On returning from a day's hunting the Pigmy carefully wraps up several small pieces of meat in grass or leaves, betakes himself to the nearest banana plantation, and having selected the bunches of bananas he requires, shins up the tree, cuts down the bunches selected, and in payment affixes one of the small packets of meat to the stem by a little wooden skewer. By this means he satisfies his conscience, and can declare that he has not stolen the bananas, but only bought them, for the Pigmy, as we have seen, is very angry at the merest suggestion of theft.

"Pigmies do no work of any sort or kind, purchasing their arrow-heads, knives, and spears from the neighboring tribes in exchange for meat, or for women whom they have seized in the bush."<sup>1</sup>

"One of the most astonishing characteristics of these strange little people is their abnormal appetite for all sorts of food. Bananas are their chief delight. A Pigmy, I have no hesitation in saying, eats as a rule twice as much as will suffice a full-grown man. He will take a stalk containing about sixty bananas, seat himself and eat them all at meal—besides other food. Then he will lie and groan throughout the night, until morning comes, when he is ready to repeat the operation. A consequent and characteristic feature of his race is the distended abdomen; but, that considered, it is difficult to imagine where he manages to stow the enormous quantity of food he can consume at a meal. Occasionally, when I have expressed surprise—when, for instance, he has surpassed even himself—he has assumed an uninterested air, as though the matter were merely the most commonplace occurrence in the world, and the question one to be waived.

"‘Yes,’ he has said carelessly; ‘there were a few bananas there on a bunch, and I ate them. I suppose that is what they were there for. There’s nothing to be surprised about. I should like some more if there are any to be had.’”

"As they have no cooking utensils, all their food is roasted or smoked."<sup>2</sup>

"Their villages, if such they can be called, consist of groups of perhaps thirty small beehive-shaped huts, each about four feet high; the entrance is a small opening a foot and a half high, allowing just room enough for them to creep through.

<sup>1</sup> Burrows, "Land of the Pigmies," pp. 187-188.

<sup>2</sup> Burrows, "Land of the Pigmies," pp. 193-194.



They make beds of sticks driven into the ground at four corners, with other sticks placed across, the whole being raised a few inches from the floor. Each village is under the leadership of a head-man or chief."<sup>1</sup>

**SELF-GRATIFICATION.** "The dress of the Pigmies is very simple. The men wear a plain strip of cloth round the loins, the women simply a bunch of leaves. They have no ornaments of any kind—a fact which shows their low development, for women as a rule use ornaments as attractions in savage life as well as in civilized. Possibly when the New Pigmy Woman arrives she will introduce necklaces and earrings.

"Musical instruments are unknown to them; even their dancing is conducted without any sweeter sound than the rhythmical tapping of a bow with an arrow. Their whole idea of dancing is to strut round in a circle, with their legs quite stiff, beating time with bow and arrow, as just mentioned, and adding absurd emphasis to the general effect by their set and solemn countenances."<sup>2</sup>

**FIGHTING.** In picking out their hunting grounds, the Pigmies show a marked preference for the territories of certain strong tribes and an aversion to the others, within whose confines they are seldom seen.

"They are, indeed, considered as valuable allies whose assistance is worth having against an outside foe; and, in spite of their small numbers, they are feared as well as respected from their revengeful nature and their hardihood in war. They on their part are quite willing to fight loyally for the chief under whose nominal rule they lead their gypsy life, and will remain in his district on these terms as long as relations between themselves and the chief are friendly. Otherwise they abandon their huts and move off at once to the neighborhood of another chief, where they settle afresh and continue to live under a similar tacit agreement.

"They are, however, quite independent, and consider themselves under no obligation to the people of the tribe they may for the time be associated with. Thus they preserve their freedom, of which they are intensely jealous, and hold themselves entirely aloof from other natives, among whom they neither marry nor are given in marriage."<sup>3</sup>

"The Pigmies have a curious method of fighting which I have had occasion to observe several times. A stranger passing through the bush along a track is fair game to them, and they therefore conceal themselves when they hear footsteps approaching. It does not take much covert to hide a Pigmy. As the unsuspecting victim goes by they send their little arrows at him, and, if the shot has told, the Pigmy who has fired jumps

<sup>1</sup> Burrows, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> Burrows, p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> Burrows, pp. 178–179.

up, utters a little cry, and pats his right arm with his left, immediately afterwards diving behind a bush plant or tree trunk. The Pigmies do the same when they are fighting against numbers in regular bush warfare.”<sup>1</sup>

## THE ADAMANESE.

**PHYSICAL FEATURES.** “The Andamanese, who are sometimes erroneously called Miucopies, inhabit the Andamanese Islands in the Bay of Bengal. Their head hair is extremely frizzly (woolly), fine in texture, lustreless and seldom more than two or three inches long, or five inches when untwisted, its colour varies between black, greyish black, and sooty, the last perhaps predominating. Hair only occasionally grows on the face and then but scantily. There is little or no hair over the surface of the body. The skin has several shades of colour between bronze or dark copper, sooty, and black, the predominating colour being a dull leaden hue like that of a black-leaded stove.”<sup>2</sup> The average stature of these people is about 4 feet 10 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches, the head moderately brachycephalic, the average cranial index being about 83. “The features may be described as: face broad at the cheek-bones; eyes prominent; nose much sunken at the root, straight and small; lips full but not everted; chin small; the jaws do not project.”<sup>3</sup>

**LIFE CONDITIONS.** The Andamanese cannot strictly be called nomads for while they do a good deal of wandering in search of food yet they come back at intervals to their temporarily abandoned villages. “The sea, which washes their coasts, is full of fish, and abounds in turtles; the jungles are filled with wild pigs; the bees furnish abundance of honey. To these three articles of food, which furnish the staple of their diet, are added some mammals and reptiles, more rarely captured, various birds, and several fruits and edible roots. This abundance of wild food readily explains how this population, so intelligent and industrious, has yet never felt the necessity of domesticating an animal or cultivating a plant; how it does not even know that rude form of gardening and farming met with among its sisters of the continent and of the Eastern archipelagoes.”<sup>4</sup>

While these people have fire and use it in cooking and heating yet they have no way of creating it. In all probability they obtained it originally from a volcano on the island. The people naturally display much care and skill in the measures

<sup>1</sup> Burrows, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> Wollaston, “Pigmies and Papuans,” p. 305.

<sup>3</sup> Wollaston, p. 305.

<sup>4</sup> Quatrefages, “The Pigmies,” p. 121.

they adopt for avoiding such inconvenience as might be caused by the extinction of their fires.

“Both when encamped and while journeying, the means employed are at once simple and effective. When they all leave an encampment with the intention of returning in a few days, besides taking with them one or more smouldering logs, wrapped in leaves if the weather be wet, they place a large burning log or faggot in some sheltered spot, where, owing to the character and condition of the wood invariably selected on these occasions, it smoulders for several days, and can be easily rekindled when required.”<sup>1</sup>

**SHELTERS AND ENCAMPMENTS.** The houses are of three general types. The first is merely a lean-to and is used when only a brief encampment is made, the second is the permanent type, and is made square of trees with a thatch of leaves. The third type is a simplification of the second, and is erected where the stay is longer than a few days but yet is not of sufficient duration to call for a stable hut.

“Permanent encampments vary in size, and consist of several huts, which in all are rarely inhabited by more than 50 to 80 persons, though they are capable of affording accommodation, of a kind, to a much larger number if necessity arise as happens not unfrequently when festive tribal gatherings are arranged in honor of a wedding or other occasion of rejoicing.

“The permanent encampments of the *Âryôto* are established in those sites which offer special advantages for fishing and turtling at all seasons. Wherever there is a fine stretch of sandy beach, with an extensive foreshore, they will be invariably found, for, at such places, throughout the year the women are able at low tide to catch fish in pools with their hand-nets, and to collect large quantities of shell-fish while, during the flood tides, the men enjoy exceptional facilities for shooting fish and harpooning turtles, etc.

“Although the sites selected for occupation are usually well-sheltered, it is not always found possible in tempestuous weather, even in the dense jungle which covers every portion of their country, to obtain shelter sufficient to allow of their huts being so placed as to face inwards towards the dancing ground. The primary consideration being naturally to secure as much comfort as possible, the sloping roof is at such times presented towards the prevailing wind.”<sup>2</sup>

**MARRIAGE.** The relationship between the sexes is very similar to that observed among so many savage people. Before marriage absolute freedom exists, provided the men and girls are not related. If a girl is found to be *enceinte* she names the man, if she can, and he will marry her. But it makes little dif-

<sup>1</sup> J. A. I., pp. 150. (1882-1883.)

<sup>2</sup> J. A. I., pp. 107-108, (1882-83).

ference whether he is the father of the child or not provided that he has had connection with her at some time. Seldom does he object to becoming her husband.

After the marriage strict chastity is required of both the man and the woman.

**CLOTHING.** The children of both sexes are entirely nude while even the older people wear very little. But what is lacking in actual clothing is made up in ornaments, such things as garters, bracelets, necklaces of bones, wood, or shell. When the men are in full dress they wear branches of leaves attached to their knees and wrists while a big leaf is bound around the head. Around the waist is worn a belt into which they insert arrows or other objects which they wish to carry. The women wear a small apron of leaves which they will not remove even in the presence of members of their own sex.

“Both sexes tattoo their entire bodies in a very simple way, by little horizontal and vertical incisions in alternating series. The women are generally charged with the operation, and, as instrument, employ a piece of quartz or glass; but the first three incisions, made low on the back, can only be made by a man, and with an arrow used for hunting wild pigs. Moreover, while these wounds are open, the patient must abstain from the meat of these animals.”<sup>1</sup>

**RELIGION.** The Andamanese believe in a Supreme Being, Puluga, but the conception of him has been so changed by outside influences that the early primitive elements have been greatly altered. Besides this god, there are numerous others that occupy the forces of nature and effect man to a greater or less degree.

One of the religious legends of these people is very similar to that of the flood in the Old Testament. “For a long time men had neglected the observance of Puluga’s prescriptions. In his anger the god sent a great flood, which covered the whole earth and destroyed all living things. Two men and two women, who were by chance in a canoe, alone escaped, and were the ancestors of the present islanders. Puluga created anew for them animals of every species, but he neglected to give them fire. Then it was that one of their deceased friends, touched by their distress, went to seek a brand at the very hearth of God. Shortly after, the last interview between Puluga and men took place. The god declared to them that the deluge was a punishment for their disobedience to his commands, and that they would undergo the same punishment again if they fell once more into the same faults. From that time, the Mincopies say, the prescriptions of Puluga have been carefully observed.”<sup>2</sup>

**FUNERALS.** “The funeral rites—for it is proper to use

<sup>1</sup> Quatrefages, “The Pigmyes,” p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> Quatrefages, pp. 132–133.

this expression—are nearly the same for children as for adults. The former, however, are always buried in the midst of the camp, while the latter are transported to the thickest part of the jungle, where they are either buried, or exposed on a platform built at the bifurcation of two large branches.

“On the death of a child the relatives and friends for hours weep by the little body. Then, as a sign of mourning, they paint themselves from head to foot with a paste of olive-coloured clay. Moreover, after having their heads shaved, the men put a lump of the same clay just above the forehead, and the women place a similar lump upon the top of the head.

“Eighteen hours are usually taken in making the toilet of the dead. The mother shaves the head and paints it, as well as the neck, wrists, and knees, with ochre and white clay. Then the limbs are folded and wrapped in large leaves held by cords. The father digs the grave under the fireplace in the hut. When everything is ready the parents say a last farewell to their dead by gently blowing two or three times upon his face. Then one finishes the wrapping in leaves, and places the corpse in a sitting position in the grave, which is immediately filled. The fire is lighted again, and the mother places upon the grave a shell containing a few drops of her own milk, that the *spirit* of her child may quench its thirst. The Mincopies believe, indeed, that one of the two principles which animate the body will haunt for some time its old abode. In order that it may not be troubled, the community leave their camp, after having surrounded the hut, or even the whole village, with a garland of rushes (*ara*), the presence of which informs any visitor that death has stricken one of the inhabitants and that he must depart.

“During the period of mourning the village is abandoned. At the end of about three months they return, the funeral garland is removed, and the body exhumed. The father gathers the bones, cleans them carefully, and divides them into small fragments suitable for use in necklaces. The skull is carefully painted yellow, covered again with a sort of network ornamented by little shells, and the mother puts it on a string around her neck. After a few days the father in his turn wears the relie. The other bones are used to make necklaces, which the parents distribute among their friends as souvenirs. At the same time the lump of clay, which was worn until then as a sign of mourning, is removed, and the usual painting and ornaments are resumed.

“However, all the ceremonies are not yet accomplished. On a day agreed upon, the friends of the family gather about the hut. The father, holding in his arms the children left to him, chants some ancient song, the refrain of which is taken up by the women, while all assistants express their sympathy

by noisy lamentations. Then the parents, after having executed the *dance of tears* retire to their hut, while the dance goes on for several hours longer.”<sup>1</sup>

**REGULATIVE ORGANIZATION.** “Each tribe comprises inhabitants of the coast, and inhabitants of the interior, forming two great divisions, each having a great chief independent of the other. These two divisions are again divided into an indefinite number of little groups or communities of from twenty to fifty individuals, each with a secondary chief, who recognises the authority of the principal chief. But this authority does not amount to very much. Its privileges consist mainly in regulating the movements of the tribe or group and in organising their assemblies and feasts. Moreover, neither the great nor the secondary chief can punish or reward. Their influence, then, is entirely moral; but, for all that, it is none the less real and considerable, principally over the young unmarried men; who zealously serve the chiefs and do their hardest work for them. The office of chief is elective, but generally passes from father to son if the son has the desirable qualities.”<sup>2</sup>

## NEGRITOS OF THE MALAY PENINSULA.

**PHYSICAL FEATURES.** “The Semang, who are the Negritos of the Malay Peninsula, live in the central portion of the Peninsula. The hair of the head is short, universally woolly, and black, and is scant on the face and body. The skin is a dark chocolate brown. The height is about five feet; the skull is mesocephalic with a cephalic index of 79. The face is round, the forehead rounded, narrow and projecting, or as it were, ‘swollen,’ the nose short and flattened, the nostrils much distended, the breadth remarkably great.”<sup>3</sup> The cheekbones are broad, the jaws very prognathous, the lips thick. One characteristic feature is the great thickening of the integumental part of the upper lip, the whole mouth region projecting from the lower edge of the nose.

**LIFE CONDITIONS.** The state of civilization to which these people have attained is very low. “They neither plant nor have they any manufactures except their rude bamboo and rattan vessels, the fish and game traps which they set with much skill, and the bows, blow-pipes (in which they use poisoned darts), and bamboo spears with which they are armed. They are skilful hunters, however, catch fish by ingeniously constructed traps, and live almost entirely on jungle-roots and the produce of their hunting and fishing.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quatrefages, pp. 106–107.

<sup>2</sup> Quatrefages, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> Wollaston, p. 306.

<sup>4</sup> Encycl. Brit. under Malay Peninsula, p. 473.

“The Semang construct bee-hive and long communal huts and weather screens similar to those of the Andamanese. They also erect tree shelters, but direct evidence is very scanty that pure Semang inhabit huts with a flooring raised on piles; they sleep on bamboo platforms.”<sup>1</sup>

## NEGRITOS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

**PHYSICAL FEATURES.** “The Aeta live in the mountainous districts of the larger islands and in some of the smaller islands of the Philippines. It is convenient to retain this name for the variously named groups of Philippine Negritos, many of whom show admixture with other peoples.”<sup>2</sup> The height of these people averages about 4 ft. 9½ in., the color of the skin is a dark chocolate brown, the head is brachycephalic with a cephalic index of 82.2, the hair is woolly and the adult males have a slight beard, but there is not much hair on the body. The nose is broad, flat, and depressed at the roots; the nostrils are invariably visible from the front. The eyes are round and set far apart, the lips thick and everted, but not protruding, while the upper lip has the same convexity as seen in the Negritos of the Malay Peninsula. The arms are disproportionately long and the lower extremities are slender.

**NUMBERS.** “The number of Negritos in the Philippines can hardly exceed 25,000, and it is constantly diminishing from purely natural causes. In many regions their birth rate is known to be materially below their death rate, and in my opinion they must be regarded as a ‘link’ which is not now missing, but soon will be. Within my recollection they have disappeared from Cebu, Masbate, and Sibuyan. At last accounts but 14 individuals remained in Tablas, where they were formerly numerous.

“Statements to the effect that Negritos build houses in trees are, so far as my personal observation and information go, without foundation in fact.”

**LIFE CONDITIONS.** The Negritos are essentially a wild and nomadic peoples living almost entirely on the vegetation of the forests and on the fish and game which they catch. The dog is their only domesticated animal, although around a good many of their encampments there are found a few wild chickens which are partially domesticated. Some few of these people have been known to plant corn and rice, but it is an uncommon occurrence.

**HOUSES.** “The tiny settlements which we have visited were abandoned very hastily, but it was easy to obtain complete

<sup>1</sup> Wollaston, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> Wollaston, p. 306.

inventories of the property of their owners, which, even to the bows and arrows, was often left behind. The 'houses' were constructed by covering small rectangular frameworks of pole with a thin thatch of rattan leaves and grass. Each shelter thus made was inclined toward the sun, or wind or rain, and was held in a slanting position by a stick sharpened at one end and forked at the other, the sharpened end being pushed into the ground and the forked end placed against the shelter at or near its central point.

"The smallest of these structures measured about four feet by five, the largest some eight feet by six. Hanging from them, or placed under them, were a few cocoanut shells; an occasional earthen pot, usually broken; fish lines equipped with stone sinkers and with bone or steel hooks; an occasional small casting net; a few bits of bark cloth; bows of *Palma brava*; arrows with heads of *Palma brava*, bamboo, or more rarely, of steel; a few rude *bolos*; scraps of cheap cotton cloth, and nothing more!"<sup>1</sup>

**CLOTHES AND BODY DECORATIONS.** "The men wear small clouts, and the women wear short skirts reaching from the waist to the knee. They are very fond of brightly colored cloth, scarlet being preferred, but the individuals who cannot get cloth, and there are many such, use instead the so-called 'bark cloth' so widely employed by inhabitants of the islands of the Pacific. Men frequently shave the crowns of their heads 'in order to let the heat out'!"<sup>2</sup>

"They do not tattoo their bodies, but ornament them with scar patterns, produced by cutting through the skin with sharp pieces of bamboo and rubbing dirt into the wounds thus formed in order to infect them and make good big scars!"<sup>3</sup>

"Many of the Negritos point their front teeth, but not by filing them, as is commonly supposed. A chip of wood is held behind the tooth to be operated upon; the point of a bolo is placed in such a position as to slant across the corner of the tooth to be removed, and a sharp blow on the bolo chips a piece from the tooth. The opposite corner is similarly operated upon, and an artistic point is thus produced!

**MUSIC.** "The music and dancing of the Negritos are especially interesting. Many of them know how to make and to play both the bamboo nose-flute and a kind of jews'-harp made from bamboo. Some of them use crude stringed instruments fashioned from single joints of bamboo, the strings being cut from the outer layer of wood, to which their ends remain attached, and being raised up by means of 'bridges.' The distribution of the several kinds of musical instruments above

<sup>1</sup> Worcester, "Head Hunters of Northern Luzon." 23 Nat. Geog. Mag., Sept. 1912, p. 841.

<sup>2</sup> Worcester, pp. 838-841.

<sup>3</sup> Worcester, p. 838.



mentioned is more or less local, but the bronze tom-tom, or 'gansa,' is in universal use, although some Negritos play it with a drumstick, while others beat it with their hands. Many of their dances are pantomimic. Their singing is often weird in the extreme. It would be idle to attempt to describe it; only phonographic records could do it partial justice.

**DANCES.** "There are many stories current to the effect that Negritos are often to be met with wandering through the forest in a state of absolute nudity, and that they indulge in various obscene dances. I am satisfied that the former series of tales are without foundation in fact. Objectionable dances are very rare among the wild peoples of the Philippines, although they are sometimes indulged in by the Moros, and are common among the Manobos of Mindanao. One apparently credible witness, who was a surgeon in the United States Army, informed me that he had once witnessed such a dance among the Negritos in the wildest part of the Zambales Mountains. I have never observed anything of the sort, nor do I believe that such dances occur with any degree of frequency among these peoples.

**HEAD-HUNTING.** "Curiously enough, the head-hunting peoples of the the Philippines are apparently limited to northern Luzon. None of the warlike hill tribes inhabiting other parts of the archipelago are known to take the heads of their victims.

"The explanation of their head-hunting customs which is given by the Negritos of northeastern Luzon is very simple. They believe that each family must take at least one head per year or suffer misfortune in the form of sickness, wounds, starvation, or death. Their victims are always beheaded with bolos. Heads are buried in the ground under the 'houses' of the men who take them. Plates, or ollas, are placed over the spots where the heads are buried, and possibly contain offerings to evil spirits. The houses under which heads are buried are then abandoned and their supposedly fortunate owners look forward to a period free from death, sickness, or injury, and to success in their hunting and fishing."<sup>1</sup>

## PIGMIES OF NEW GUINEA.

**PHYSICAL FEATURES.** The stature of these people averages about 4 feet 9 inches; the skin is a light brown; the cephalic index is 79.5. The hair is short, woolly, and black with a good deal on the face and a short downy hair scattered over the body. The nose is straight with wide nostrils; the eyes large and round. "Their prognathism and deeply lined faces give them an ape-like appearance."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Worcester, pp. 847-850.

<sup>2</sup> Keane, p. 261.

**LIFE CONDITIONS.** The Pigmies of New Guinea are entirely a hunting people but conditions for carrying this on are so favorable that they remain in one spot for a long period. They do, however, cultivate tobacco which they not only smoke but also use for trade with other tribes.

**HOUSES.** "The houses are scattered about over three or four acres of steeply sloping ground, from which most of the trees have been cleared. Between the houses the ground has been leveled in three places to form almost level terraces, measuring about fifteen by five yards, completely cleared of vegetation and covered with small stones. These terraces are held up on the lower side by logs and stumps of trees, and the labour of making them by people whose only tools are stone axes and pieces of wood is difficult to imagine; they are used, so far as we could understand, for dances and other ceremonies.

"The houses are greatly superior to those of the Mimika Papuans, from which they differ in every respect. They are built on piles, which raise the floor of the house, from four to ten feet above the ground according to the steepness of the slope underneath. The walls are made of long laths of split wood with big sheets of bark fastened on to the outside. The roof is a fairly steep pitched angular structure of split wood covered with over-lapping leaves of the Fan-palm. The floor is made like the walls and covered with large sheets of bark; in the middle of the floor is a square sunken box filled with sand or earth in which a fire is kept burning, and over the fire hanging from the roof is a simple rack, on which wood is placed to dry. The house consists of one nearly square compartment, measuring about ten feet in each direction. The way of entering is by a steep ladder made of two posts tied closely together, which leads to a narrow platform or balcony in front of the front wall of the house. There are no notches on the posts, but the lashings of rattan, which tie them together, answer the purpose of steps of rungs for the feet."<sup>1</sup>

**FIRE.** "By far the most interesting of the possessions of these people is the apparatus for making fire, which consists of three different parts, the split stick, the rattan, and the tinder. The split stick is a short stick of wood an inch or so in diameter, which is split at one end and is held open by a small pebble placed between the split halves. The rattan is a long piece of split rattan wound upon itself into a neatly coiled ring, and the tinder is usually a lump of the fibrous sheath of a palm shoot and sometimes a piece of dried moss.

"The method of making fire is as follows: In the split of the stick, between the stone which holds the split ends apart and the solid stick, is placed a small fragment of tinder. The operator—if one may use so modern a word in describing so ancient a practice—places the stick upon the ground and

<sup>1</sup> Wollaston, pp. 204–205.

secures the solid, i.e. the unsplit end with his foot. Then, having unwound about a yard of the rattan, he holds the coil in one hand and the free end in the other and looping the middle of it underneath the stick at the point where the tinder is placed he proceeds to saw it backwards and forwards with extreme rapidity. In a short space of time, varying from ten to thirty seconds, the rattan snaps and he picks up the stick with the tinder, which has probably by this time begun to smoulder, and blows it into a flame. At the point where the rattan rubs on the stick a deep cut is made on the stick, and at each successive use the stick is split a little further down and the rattan is rubbed a little further back, so that a well-used fire-stick is marked with a number of dark burnt rings.”<sup>1</sup>

**ORNAMENTS.** “Their ornaments are few and simple; a number of men wear arm-bands and leg-bands of plaited fibre similar to those worn by the Papuans, and several of them wear necklaces of seeds, short pieces of bamboo, scraps of broken shell, teeth of wallabies and (in one instance), the bones of a small mammal. The lobes of both ears are pierced and a few men wear in one ear an ornament made of a small piece of gourd to which are attached seeds, scraps of fur, claws of birds and other ornamental odds and ends. One young man, with more originality than the rest, thrust through his front hair a piece of sharpened bone, which projected downwards over his face and gave him a most distinguished appearance.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wollaston, pp. 200–201.

<sup>2</sup> Wollaston, p. 199.

## CHAPTER XII.

### TIBETANS.

**GEOGRAPHY.** "Tibet is geographically, roughly speaking, that section of Central Asia which extends between the 76° and 102° of east longitude, from the 28° to 36° of north latitude, and with the exception of its extreme western, southwestern and southern portions, it forms an integral portion of the Chinese Empire."<sup>1</sup> It is the highest country in the world, comprising table-lands averaging over 16,500 feet above the sea, the valleys being at 12,000 to 17,400 feet and the peaks at 20,000 to 24,600 feet. "In the north, Tibet is composed of high plateaux, intersected by numerous chains of mountains running from east to west, a bleak arid country, either desert or inhabited by a scattered population of nomads. To the south of these pastoral tribes, and then only in the larger valleys live a sedentary people, who cultivate the soil."<sup>2</sup> "It is bounded on the north by Turkestan, on the east by China, on the west by Kashmir and Ladak, and on the south by India, Nepal and Bhutan. It has an area of over 1,000,000 square miles and an estimated population of about 3,000,000."<sup>3</sup>

**CLIMATE.** "The climate of Tibet varies so greatly over the enormous area and different altitudes of the country, that no two travellers agree precisely in their records. Tibet is affected by the southwest monsoons, but in varying degrees according to geographical position. In Western Tibet, bordering on the Kashmir frontier, intense dryness pervades the atmosphere during nine months of the year; but little snow falls, and the western passes are so little subject to intermittent falls of fresh snow as frequently to be traversable during the entire year. Low temperatures are prevalent throughout these western regions, whose bleak desolation is unrelieved by the existence of trees or vegetation of any size, and where the wind sweeps unchecked across vast expanses of arid plain. All the western region is but slightly affected by the monsoon. The central lake region, extending from the Kuen-lun to the Himalaya, is also characterized by extreme dryness in autumn, winter and spring, with an abundance of rain in the summer, whilst the eastern mountain region extending to China south of the Dang la is subject to much the same climatic influences as the eastern Himalayas. The southern slopes of the Dang la are deluged with rain, hail and snow throughout the year. Northern Tibet is an arid waste, subject to intense heat in summer and intense cold in winter. The climate of Southern Tibet is

<sup>1</sup> W. W. Rockhill, "Ethnology of Tibet," p. 670.

<sup>2</sup> W. W. Rockhill, "The Land of the Lamas," p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica under "Tibet."

subject to considerable modifications from that of the northern and central regions, owing doubtless to its geographical connection with Northern India. Here at an elevation of 15,000 feet, about the great lake, Dangra, we hear of well-built villages and of richly cultivated fields of barley."<sup>1</sup>

**THE PEOPLE OF TIBET.** The people of Tibet probably belong to the Turko-Mongol branch of the human race. They are divided between the nomadic tent-dwellers, called Dokpa or Drupa, living in the lake region of the north and northwest, in the transition zone between it and the river region, and the settled sedentary population of the valleys. The Dokpa are more Mongolian in type than are the more settled people, who show much mixture with outside races. "These become more Chinese as one goes towards China, or more Indian as one travels southward or westward. The reason of the very pronounced departure of this portion of the present Tibetan population from its original type is easily accounted for in the custom of foreign traders, soldiers, pilgrims, or officials inhabiting the country, of never bringing their wives into Tibet, but taking native concubines, a custom, by the way, common in most parts of Asia. In as small a population as that of Tibet, where the principal centers of population are and have been inhabited by comparatively large numbers of foreigners for several centuries at least, this profound alteration of the primitive type is easily accounted for in this manner."<sup>2</sup>

**PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE PEOPLE.** Among the Drupa Tibetans the males measure 5 feet, 5 inches; the females not appreciably less. The head is brachycephalic; the hair on the head, when worn, is black and invariably wavy, the beard is thin, the moustache is usually pulled out with tweezers; there is almost no hair on the chest and limbs. The eyes are clear brown or hazel; zygomatic arches are high, but not as high as the Mongol's; the nose is thick, sometimes depressed at the root, in other cases prominent, even aquiline, though the nostrils are broad; the ears, with fairly large lobes, stand out from the head, but to a less degree than with the Mongols; the mouth is broad, the lips not full, and among the people of the lower altitudes, decidedly thin. The shoulders are broad, the arms normal, while the legs are not well developed, the calf being especially small. The foot is large and the hand coarse.

The women are usually stouter than the men and their faces are much fuller. They are as strong, or perhaps even stronger than the men, because, obliged to do hard work from childhood, their muscles are more fully developed than those of the men, who neither carry water on their backs, work at looms, nor tend the cattle. The women's hair is long and coarse, but not very thick, and in old age it is sprinkled with white hairs.

<sup>1</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica.

<sup>2</sup> Rockhill, "Ethnographic Notes," p. 674.

There is very little, if any, perceptible odor about the Tibetan's person, save that which is readily traced to dirty clothes. Partial baldness in both sexes is not uncommon. They keep their heads tolerably clean by frequently anointing their hair and scalp with butter, but vermin are common among them, especially with the women, and it is a very common sight to see a number of them crouching before their houses in the sun, cleaning the head of a husband, a child, or a friend; all captives belong to the original owner, who eats them with relish, saying, "As they live on me, they cannot be unclean food for me, though they might be for anyone else." Washing the body is never, or hardly ever, indulged in, except involuntarily when fording a stream, or when drenched by the rain.<sup>1</sup>

The Tibetans can endure exposure without any apparent inconvenience. In the coldest weather they will slip the upper part of their bodies out of their sheepskin gowns in order to perform their work with a greater degree of freedom. The women do nearly all of their work with the right side of the body completely exposed, and they put no clothes on very small children, except in the coldest weather, allowing them to go about naked, or with only a pair of boots on.

They can also endure hunger, and are at all times light eaters. They eat a little whenever they drink their tea, but they never take a hearty meal, staving off continually the pangs of hunger. Though the nature of the food which they use is such that they cannot endure absolute privation from all food for any considerable length of time, they can with ease travel for long periods on starvation rations.

**CHARACTER OF PEOPLE.** The character of the Tibetans is well described by Father Desgodins, who lived for many years among them. "It appears to me that the Tibetan, no matter who he may be, is essentially a slave to human respect. If he believes you great, powerful and rich, there is nothing he will not do to obtain your good will, your favors, your money, or even a simple mark of your approval. If he has only something to hope for, he will receive you with all the signs of the most profound submission or of the most generous cordiality, according to circumstances, and will make you interminable compliments, using the most fulsome and the most honied expressions that the human mind has been able to invent. In this line he might give points to the most accomplished flatterer of Europe. If, on the contrary, he thinks you of low station, he will only show you stiffness, or, at the most, formal, unwilling politeness. Should your fortune change, have you become a beggar in his eyes, abandoned and without authority, he at once turns against you, treats you as a slave, takes the side of your enemies, without being ashamed at the remembrance of his former protestations of devotion and friendship, without listening to the dictates of gratitude. He is a

<sup>1</sup> Rockhill, "Ethnographic Notes," p. 675.

slave toward the great, a despot to the small, whoever they may be, dutiful or treacherous, according to circumstances, looking always for some way to cheat, and lying shamelessly to attain his end; in a word, naturally and essentially a false character. Such is, I think, the Tibetan of the cultivated countries of the south, who considers himself much more civilized than the shepherd or herdsman of the north, with whom I have had but little intercourse, and of whom I do not pretend to draw the portrait.

"One readily understands that with such a character, with dissolute habits, the Tibetan becomes easily cruel and vindictive. Often discussion, begun in laughter and usually while drinking, ends with drawn knives. If he has not appeased his anger, he never forgives. Revenge alone can pacify him, if he believes himself insulted. But he does not show it at first. On the contrary, he affects to live on good terms with his enemy. He invites him, trades in preference with him, but he will put a ball in his chest after a good dinner, during which he has shown himself most friendly and has sworn the other lasting friendship.

"Such are the principal faults of the Tibetan. What are his virtues? I believe his mind is instinctively religious, and this leads him to willingly perform certain external devotional practices and even to go on long and trying pilgrimages, which cost him, however, but little money. As to religious convictions, he has absolutely none, a result of the profound ignorance in which the lamas leave the people, either on account of their incapacity to teach them, or perhaps so as to keep the business of worship in their own hands, as it insures them a large revenue. The religious acts of the people are only performed through routine; they do not understand them or care to understand them; hence ignorance in the lower classes, scepticism and indifference in the others, principally among the mandarins and lamas. The Tibetan's other virtues are nearly all material ones, if I may use such an expression; thus, he bears with ease and for long periods cold, fatigue, hunger and thirst; but if he finds good compensation for his sufferings, he will never overlook it. He is generally active, but less industrious than the Chinese, and arts have advanced much less in Tibet than in China. While at work, he sings without a care; at a feast, he goes gossiping about and drinking with his friends; he sings, dances and drinks during the night without a recollection of the sorrows of the day before, or without thinking of the cares of the morrow. Such is the Tibetan as I have known him."<sup>1</sup>

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** "The food of the tent-dwelling Tibetans consists principally of tea and barley. The latter they buy from the agricultural Tibetans in exchange for butter, hides or wool. The grain is parched in a pan and winnowed, when most of the husk falls off; after this it is ground in a small quern when

<sup>1</sup> C. H. Desgodins, "Le Thibet," pp. 251-253, quoted by Rockhill, "Notes on Ethnology of Tibet," pp. 676-677.

it is ready for use. Tea is, however, the principal article of food among all Tibetans. It is not simply the beverage, but the food of this people, for it is nearly invariably taken mixed with butter and barley, and the leaves are not infrequently eaten."<sup>1</sup>

The tea is made into bricks before it is sold, and in some parts is the standard of the monetary system. In preparing the beverage from these bricks, it is first reduced to a powder in a mortar, then put in the kettle with hot water and allowed to boil for about five minutes. Sometimes it is drunk at this stage of its preparation either clear or with the addition of milk, but usually it is strained into a tea churn, into which is also put a piece of butter and a little barley. It is then churned and finally poured into a teapot of metal or pottery. Each person takes from the bosom of his gown a small wooden bowl, a little tea is sprinkled to the four cardinal points as an offering to the gods, and the bowls are then filled. "Taking with his fingers a chunk of butter from a sheep's paunch in which it is kept, or from a wooden butter box, the drinker lets it melt in his bowl, drinking the while some of the tea, and blowing the melted butter to one side. When but a little tea is left in the bottom of the bowl, a handful of barley is added and the tea, butter and meal are deftly worked into a ball with the right hand, the bowl being meanwhile slowly turned around in the left. The resulting lump of brown dough, which is of a rather agreeable taste, if the butter is not too rancid, is then eaten and enough tea is drunk to wash down the sodden lump. When dried cheese is eaten, it is first soaked in tea and then eaten with buttered tea and barley."<sup>2</sup>

If one eats anything such as sour milk, which may soil the bowl, it is customary to lick it clean before putting it back into the gown.

The Tibetans have no regular meals, but as the teakettle is always kept full, they can eat when they are hungry. People like the lamas who are continually reading the sacred books, and others who are steadily employed during the day, keep near them a pot of tea on a heap of hot ashes or on a little brasero. "Throughout Tibet it is not uncommon to now and then find poor people reduced to using a substitute for tea—chips of wood, roasted pease, or willow leaves, anything, in fact, which can impart a little color and slight astringent taste to their drink."<sup>3</sup>

Pork is never eaten by the tent-dwelling Tibetans, but it is used to a great extent by the people of central and eastern Tibet, but mutton and yak flesh form the greater part of the meat food. The sheep-raising Tibetans export much frozen mutton, while they themselves consume large quantities of dried mutton.

Such vegetables as cabbage, dried turnips, radishes, potatoes, pease and beans are eaten in small quantities, but of all foods they prefer tea and barley.

<sup>1</sup> Rockhill, "Notes on Ethnology of Tibet," pp. 702-703.

<sup>2</sup> Rockhill, "Notes on Ethnology of Tibet," p. 705.

<sup>3</sup> Rockhill, "Notes on Ethnology of Tibet," p. 703.



**AGRICULTURE.** Where agriculture is practiced, the only implements they have are a wooden hoe and a rude plow without even a share. This plough is drawn by a yak, and while one man leads the animal, another guides the plough. They irrigate the fields, the water frequently being carried a long distance across valleys in hollowed logs supported on light trestles. The fields are fenced in with brush, poles or stone walls.

**INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION.** "In all parts of Tibet, whether among the pastoral tribes or in the towns and villages, the women not only do most of the household work, but they attend to much of the bartering, make the butter, assist in milking the cows and looking after the flocks. The men, aided by the women, work in the fields, or go on distant journeys, hiring out their yaks or mules to carry freight, or hiring themselves out as mule or yak drivers to merchants or to some neighboring lamasery. Those who remain in their town or village sometimes follow a trade which occupies them during a small portion of their time. Some are smiths, working silver, copper or iron, and, when needs be, becoming carpenters, gunsmiths or locksmiths; others, again, occupy themselves, when industriously inclined, twisting yarn, weaving garters, or making felt. In the towns nearly all shops are kept by women.

"Although the division of labor between the sexes is very unequal, much the greater part devolving upon the women, the position of that sex is not affected injuriously thereby. The wife's opinion is always asked in household matters and in questions of trade, and her authority in the house is supreme. She joins with the men in all discussions with perfect freedom and assurance, and in nearly every walk of life she is held to be on a footing of perfect equality by the male sex."<sup>1</sup>

**DWELLINGS.** The dwellings of the Tibetans are of two kinds—the tent and the stone huts. The tents made of yak-hair felt are inhabited by the pastoral tribes, but the agriculturists occupy the more permanent habitations. The tents are rectangular and have a flat roof. They vary in length from ten to fifty feet, but all of them have a hole along the center of the roof, about two feet wide, to admit light and let the smoke escape. Under this is a ridge pole supported at each end by vertical posts. The roof is fastened by long ropes, which stretch to the ground. In order to keep off the wind and snow the inmates build a low wall of mud and stones, or else of dry dung, around the outside of the tent, or, when large enough, inside of it.

"In the center of the tent is a long, narrow stove made of mud and stones, with a fire place in one end and a flue passing along its whole length, so that several pots may be kept boiling at the same time. Around the walls of the tents are piled up leather bags in which the occupants keep their food; also saddles, pieces of felt, and innumerable odds and ends, of which only the owner

<sup>1</sup> Rockhill, "Notes on Ethnology of Tibet," p. 682.

knows the value and use. A small stone or birch wood mortar for pounding tea, a wooden tea churn about two feet high—made of a hollow log and hooped with wood, or out of a joint of bamboo, which are, in some parts, used also to churn butter in—a few small dirty wooden milk pails with handles of plaited yak hair, a log or two of wood roughly squared, and which takes the place of tables, and a small quern are the principal articles of furniture in these tents.”<sup>1</sup>

The houses of the agricultural peoples are made of limestone or shaly rock, the surface of which is covered with a coating of mud or plaster. A large gateway with heavy double doors leads into the courtyard, around which are the buildings and sheds. These houses are also two-storied, a notched log of wood set against the wall serving as a ladder to reach the upper one. The roof of the first floor, which is made of mud and rests on heavy rafters, acts as a gallery to reach the upper one. Holes are left in this so that the smoke can escape from the rooms below, and in the case of inside rooms, these holes are the only means by which light is admitted. When there are windows, they are merely openings about three feet square in the walls, without any means of keeping out the wind and cold, except in the finest houses, where heavy boards sliding in grooves are used to close them. There is absolutely no furniture; sometimes a log of wood roughly squared is found near the hearth; this is used to place one's cup on, but as a rule, even this crude table is lacking. Some of the houses contain furnaces, on which kettles boil over a dung fire; in others, there are large, open hearths—in the center of each are three stories on which to rest the pots. “The simplicity of the nomad is found in all the appointments of the agricultural Tibetan's home. In many of the houses there are not more than two or three four-walled rooms, all the rest of the building consisting of covered galleries opening on the courtyard. These have the great advantage of being better lighted and more airy than rooms, yet hardly colder; they are also freer from vermin, with which one is fearfully tormented everywhere in Tibet, fleas especially swarming. The ground floor of all of these houses is used as a horse stable, as is often the case in mountainous and cold countries, Switzerland, for example, and every house is provided with well arranged latrines. It is probable that the heat from the horses, which is sufficient to raise the temperature of the room over their stable, suggested the idea of having them under the dwelling-room.”<sup>2</sup>

**DRESS AND ORNAMENT.** The national dress of both sexes consists of a very full, high-collared, large and long-sleeved gown, made of sheepskin in winter, and of native cloth in summer. It is tied tightly around the waist with a woolen girdle, so as to make it very baggy, and it reaches down to the knees when worn

<sup>1</sup> Rockhill, “Notes on Ethnology of Tibet,” p. 702.

<sup>2</sup> Rockhill, “The Land of the Lamas,” pp. 192–194.

by men and to the ankles when worn by women. In a large part of the country this is the only garment worn. The collar and cuffs and hems are sometimes faced with black velvet or red or blue cloth or with otter or leopard skin. High boots complete the costume.

The men shave their heads, but the women braid their hair into numerous pigtails. Men's hats vary from a low cap of cloth to one made of fur, or to one resembling the hats worn by the women in Wales.

Most of the men wear a large silver ring set with turquoise and coral beads in the left ear, while the women wear heavy pendants in each ear. Around their necks the men and women wear charm boxes made of wood, silver, copper or leather, in which they carry charms against the various accidents which may overtake them. Both sexes wear rings made of gold or silver and set with turquoise or coral beads. Most of the ornaments worn by the women are put into the hair and include bright bits of cloth, coral and glass beads and silver bands.

**MARRIAGE.** In some portions of Western Tibet marriage by capture still survives. When the bridegroom and his friends go to bring the bride from her father's house, they are met by a party of the bride's friends and relations, who stop the path. A very rough sham fight ensues, in which the bridegroom and his friends, before they are allowed to pass, are given a sound beating with thick switches.

"In other parts of Tibet the preliminaries of marriage are very similar to those of China. Go-betweens on the part of the man make overtures to the family of the girl, and if these are well received, astrologers are consulted to see whether the horoscope of the man and woman do not antagonize each other, and if the good and evil of the life of the male harmonizes in the calculation with those of the life of the female, longevity is counted upon. If not, the happiness of the couple will be short-lived."<sup>1</sup> A man frequently has to pay as much as 300 sheep, 10 horses and 10 yak for a fine-looking girl, so the parents of two or three pretty and clever girls are sure of making their fortune.

The marriage ceremony takes place at the house of the groom. When the bride enters, the mother of the groom presents her with the barley mixed with butter and a jar of milk. The whole party then sits down to dinner, which is supplied by the groom and his friends. When it is finished, the priest gives the bride a new name and she is presented with a piece of wool by the groom. This she twists into a thread as the sign of the first work of a harmonious union. Before the departure of the bride's family, both parties sing repartee songs together.

In some parts of Tibet, polyandry prevails. The elder brother chooses a wife, and the younger brothers possess her in common. Whatever may have been the origin of this, there can be little

<sup>1</sup> Rockhill, "Notes on Ethnology of Tibet," p. 725.

doubt that poverty, a desire to keep down population and to keep property undivided in families, supply sufficient reasons to justify its continuance. Perhaps the property reason is the most important. "The tillable lands are of small extent and are all under cultivation so it is extremely difficult for any one to add to his fields, which as a general rule produce only enough to support one small family. If at the death of the head of the family the property was divided among the sons, there would not be enough to supply the wants of all of them, if each had a wife and family. Moreover, the paternal abode would not accommodate them." The only solution of the problem in this case was for the sons of a family to take one wife among them, by which means their ancestral estate remained undivided, and they also saved considerable money.<sup>1</sup>

**PLEASURES.** Horse-racing is one of their favorite pastimes, but they do not understand this amusement as we do, confining themselves rather to showing off their horses and themselves in their finest trappings, or else racing by twos or threes, but not for a purse or any reward.

"Singing, a pastime of which they are very fond, is not much more agreeable to the foreign ear than is that of the Chinese or Japanese, though the Tibetans' voices are often full and sweet, and there is frequently a perceptible tune in their songs.

"Dancing is also a favorite amusement, especially in the spring of the year, when the girls go in large parties and dance on the soft green grass under the trees, the young men forming appreciative spectators. The dances can hardly be called graceful; two groups formed, and while one stood still, the other, to the music of their own singing, danced slowly backward and forward, swaying their bodies and taking high, slow steps. Then the other group had their turn, and so the dance went on by the hour."<sup>2</sup>

There are many story-tellers who wander from place to place reading to the people, who are unable to do so for themselves, from the literature of the country. Where possible, they act out the story which they are reading or telling, and this forms the nearest approach which the people have to dramatic representation. There are, however, mummers, mostly boys, who, with hideous masks on their heads, dance a grotesque dance. At the same time they sing a song which praises in the most fulsome way the person before whom they are dancing, with the hope that they may be well paid.

**RELIGION.** Buddhism was introduced into Tibet in the seventh century, A. D., and since that time has been the religion of the country. In its present form, however, it is difficult to find any of the simplicity which characterized its earlier forms, for demonolatry and mysticism have become the important features. The priests of this religion are called Lamas, and hence

<sup>1</sup> Rockhill, "Land of the Lamas," p. 211.

<sup>2</sup> Rockhill, "Land of the Lamas," p. 247.

it comes about that this peculiar form of Buddhism as held by the Tibetans is known as Lamaism.

The Lamas play an important part in the life of the people, for they are not only the religious leaders, but also wield great temporal power. "In their hands is nearly all the wealth of the land, acquired by trading, donations, money-lending and bequests. Their landed property is frequently enormous; their serfs and bondsmen swarm."<sup>1</sup> If they are not able to carry out their wishes by peaceful means, they do not hesitate to take upon themselves the attitude of the Knights Templar. "The large lamaseries are rather fortified camps than the abodes of peace-loving Buddhist monks; every lama is well-armed, well mounted, and always ready for the fray; whether it be to resist the local chiefs, or the Chinese, or to attack a rival lamasery."

Although the Tibetans are a very religious people, yet they have few ceremonies of a religious character in their daily life. One of the commonest is the evening prayer. "As night falls, lamps are lit on the altars of every Buddhist temple, and a short service is chanted, while lamas seated on the porch play a rather mournful hymn on long coffer horns and clarinets. This is the signal for the housewives to light bundles of aromatic juniper boughs in the ovens made for the purpose on the roofs of their houses, and as the fragrant smoke ascends to heaven, they sing a hymn or litany in which the men of the house often join."

It is a universal custom among this people, before eating or drinking anything, to dip the forefinger of the right hand in it and scatter a little of the contents towards the four cardinal points, reciting a short prayer the while. This and the mumbling of the many prayers or some special formula given them by a lama, are practically the only religious observances of the people. It is no uncommon thing to pass a family established under a tent in a locality where shaly stones are abundant, every member busily occupied incising on slabs of rock the sacred formula, and building up after months, perhaps years, of labor a "mani wall," each stone in it having the prayer sculptured on it and frequently carefully painted. These walls are sometimes over a hundred yards long and ten feet high. "Others will shape the letters composing the prayer with blocks of white stones on some far-seen mountain side, giving them such huge dimensions, that they can be read four or five miles away.

"Small stones on which the prayer is sculptured are continually offered to one by beggars, who are paid for them by a handful of tsamba or a little tea, and a person of any respectability never dreams of refusing to buy all offered to him, placing them along the walls of his house, or else on the nearest mani wall."<sup>2</sup>

Most of the Tibetans possess prayer wheels. These wheels consist of circular pieces of metal with a handle on the bottom by means of which the wheel can be revolved. Inside of this metal

<sup>1</sup> Rockhill, "Land of the Lamas," pp. 215-216.

<sup>2</sup> Rockhill, "Land of the Lamas," pp. 249-250.

ring are placed yards and yards of paper on which are written numerous prayers. When a man is feeling especially religious and desires to store up for himself much credit in the next world he revolves the wheel. A prayer is supposed to ascend for each revolution so that in a short time a person has thousands of prayers to his credit. This is a most convenient mode of praying, for a person may do it while walking along the street, or even while visiting with his friends.

**DEATH AND FUNERALS.** "The old are but little respected, and it often occurs that a son kills his father when he has become a burden to him. It also frequently happens that when a person is dying, a relative or friend asks him, 'Will you come back or will you not?' If he replies that he will, they pull a leather bag over his head and smother him; if he says he will not, he is allowed to die in peace. The probable explanation of this custom is a fear that the spirit of the dead will haunt its former abode.

"The remains of the dead are exposed on the hillsides in spots selected by lamas; if the body is rapidly devoured by wild beasts and birds of prey, the righteousness of the deceased is held to be evident, but if it remains a long time undevoured, his wickedness is proved."<sup>1</sup>

"No funeral services take place before the crops have been gathered, except in the case of very poor people, whose corpses are thrown into the streams at once after death. All those whose bodies are to be disposed of by cremation or by being fed to the birds or dogs are put in wicker baskets, well salted, and kept until the time of the funeral. In the case of the bodies of rich laymen, which have been cremated, the ashes are sometimes collected in a box and a *do-bong* built over it, but generally they are left on the spot where the cremation took place. When the body is to be devoured by dogs and birds of prey, the usual method is to lay the naked corpse on the ground, fastening it by a rope to a stake so that it cannot be dragged about. But there is another more desirable mode sometimes followed, as was done some years ago with the body of the 'living Buddha' at Lit'ang. This was carried out of the lamasery on a stretcher which was followed by the abbot and his 3,500 monks. Many of the latter had human jaw-bones fastened to their left arms, and skull bowls hanging from their sides. The procession marched slowly to the top of a hill outside the town; the corpse was laid on the ground, and the abbot took his seat on a stone nearby. Then some lamas stripped the flesh off the body, commencing with the arms, and handed the pieces to the abbot.

"These he held at arm's length in the air, when vultures, which were sailing around in expectation of the feast, swooped down and snatched them from his hand. In this manner all but the bones were disposed of; then these were pounded into a pulp, and the abbot mixed this with tsamba in his eating bowl, and fed the balls thus made to the birds, reserving for his own private delectation

<sup>1</sup> Rockhill, "Land of the Lamas," p. 81.

the last ball of the unsavory mess. With this the ceremonies were at an end. This form of obsequies, known as 'celestial interment' is the most esteemed."<sup>1</sup>

**GOVERNMENT.** "Politically Tibet may be divided into three parts: (1) Country under direct Lh'asan rule or influence; (2) country under Chinese rule or influence; (3) country under British or other rule or influence. The first part comprises all central, western and most of the northern portions of the country. The second part includes all northeastern Tibet, most of the eastern, and a long narrow strip called Jyade. The third part includes Sikhina, Bhutan and Ladak."<sup>2</sup>

The spiritual and temporal ruler of the Kingdom of Lh'asa is called Talé lama, and is an incarnation of the god Shenräzig, the patron saint of the land. Prior to 1720 the Talé lama was only spiritual ruler of Tibet, but at that date he was made also temporal ruler by the Chinese. Under him is a regent, colloquially called 'King of Tibet,' who is also a lama, chosen in turn from one of the four great monasteries of Lh'asa, and whose appointment is made, like that of the Talé lama himself and of all other high dignitaries of the state, subject to the approval of the Emperor of China. This regent is president of the Council of Ministers who are five in number, one lama and four laymen. These administer the laws of the country and act also in a judicial capacity.

The second portion of Tibet, which is under Chinese influence, is ruled over by hereditary chiefs, and by the influential headmen of the country who have been appointed by the Emperor. These men receive a yearly payment from China of 100 ounces of silver, and also have the privilege of sending tribute to Peking, which gives them the right to trade under very favorable conditions.

In the third section the rule is divided between a temporal and a spiritual advisor, who are appointed under approval of the English.

**LAW AND PUNISHMENT.** "There exists no written law for the administration of justice; tradition is the only code followed. Confiscation and fines are the penalties imposed for most crimes and offences, murder not excepted. These fines comprise (1) a sum of money, or number of bricks of tea, determined according to the social standing of the victim in case of murder, which fine goes to the state; (2) a fixed sum for the family of the victim, nominally to pay for the performance of religious ceremonies for the deceased.

"Among some of the tribes the murderer of a man of the upper class is fined 120 bricks of tea; for the murder of a middle-class man he is fined 80 bricks, for killing a woman 40 bricks, and so on down through the social scale, the murderer of a beggar or a wandering foreigner being fined only a nominal amount, 3 or 4 bricks. In case the victim is a lama, the murderer has often to pay 200 to 300 bricks."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rockhill, "Land of the Lamas," pp. 286-287.

<sup>2</sup> Rockhill, "Notes on Ethnology of Tibet," p. 680.

<sup>3</sup> Rockhill, "Land of the Lamas," p. 221.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE YAKUTS.

**ENVIRONMENT.** Yakutsk is a province of East Siberia including most of the basin of the river Lena and covering an area of about 1,530,253 square miles, equal to about two-fifths the area of the United States without Alaska. It is bounded on the north by the Arctic Ocean, on the west by the provinces of Yeniseisk and Irkutsk, on the south by Irkutsk and Amur, and is separated from the Pacific by the narrow Maritime Province. The southeastern portion of Yakutsk is made up of a plateau 2,500 to 3,500 feet in height. "Its moist, elevated valleys, intersected by ranges of flat dome-shaped hills, which rise nearly 1,000 feet above the plateau, form an immense desert of forest and marsh. An alpine country skirts the plateau all along its north-west margin and contains the productive gold mines in the spurs between the Vitim and the Lena. The latter stream drains the outer base of this alpine region. It is a wild land, traversed by chains of mountains, all having a northeast strike, and intersected by deep, narrow valleys, down which the mountain streams tumble uncontrolled. The whole is clothed with dense forests, through which none but the Tunguses can find their way. The summits of the mountains, 4,000 to 6,000 feet, mostly rise above the limits of tree vegetation, but in no case pass the snow line. The summits and slopes alike are strewn with debris of crystalline rock, mostly hidden under thick incrustations of lichens, amid which the larch alone is able to find sustenance. Birch and aspera grow on the lower slopes; and in the narrow valley bottoms thickets of poplar and willow, or patches of grass spring up on the scanty alluvium."

In the southwest there are vast meadows which are sometimes marshy, while further north mosses and lichens are predominant vegetation and stretch from the meadows to the shores of the ice-bound ocean.<sup>1</sup>

**CLIMATE.** This region is colder than any other part of the inhabited globe. At one place the temperature of  $-79.5^{\circ}$  F. has been observed, while the average temperature for the three winter months is  $-53.1^{\circ}$  F. At the town of Yakutsk the average temperature in winter is  $-40.2^{\circ}$  F. and the soil is frozen to a depth of 600 feet. There are only 145 days when there is no snow on the ground. The Lena river is free from ice only 161 days of the year. The interval between the latest frost of one season and the earliest frost of the next is 37 days.

**HISTORY.** "The Yakuts belong to the Turkish stock, and speak a dialect of Turkish with an admixture of Mongolian words.

<sup>1</sup> Encycl. Brit. under Yakutsk, p. 898.



They call themselves Sokha or Sakhov, their present name having been borrowed by the Russians from the Tunguses, who call them Yeko or Yekot. Most probably they once inhabited southern Siberia, especially the upper Yenisei, where a Tartar tribe calling itself Sakha still survives in Minusinsk."<sup>1</sup>

**PHYSICAL FEATURES.** The Yakuts are middle sized, with dolichocephalic skulls, very high cheek bones, narrow slanting eyes, broad flat nose. The face is diamond shaped. The hair on the head is black, thick and long, but there is very little on the face and body.

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** The people are almost entirely on the cattle-raising stage, for the character of the country is such that agriculture is impossible.

"The economic unit amongst the Yakuts, taking the whole territory into account, consists of four persons—two grown labourers, one youth, and one boy or old man incompetent to do full work. Ten head of cattle are regarded as indispensable for the maintenance of such a group. Above that norm the Yakuts think that comfort begins, and below it, poverty. In those districts where fish can be obtained as an adjunct, those who have ten head of cattle are well off; but where neither hunting nor fishing offers additional resources, fifteen or twenty head of cattle are indispensable to secure the existence of a family. The latter is the case in the north, on account of the duration of the winter and the badness of the meadows. In the south, where tillage is available as an important subsidiary industry to maintain life, and where it is easy to find wages occupations in winter, the limit of independent means of existence falls to one and a half head of cattle per soul. In spite, therefore, of the wide difference between the absolute amounts of wealth indicated by these limits—from six to twenty head of cattle, i. e., from 120 to 400 rubles<sup>2</sup> (\$60 to \$200) of capital—all the households that are at the limit stand on the verge of distress. The least accident overthrows the security of their existence, and the least subsidiary resource gives them a chance to live and grow. Such households constitute the great mass of the population."<sup>3</sup>

"In case a family possess less than one head of cattle per soul they must hire themselves out for wages. The rate of wages is usually everywhere the same. The men get from 35 to 40 rubles per annum with board, if they are able bodied mowers; and women who rake, or tend cows, get from 20 to 24 rubles, with board. The rations are determined by custom; those of the men are better than those of the women. Only a small part of the wages is paid in money; generally the employers give wares, sometimes such as the employé does not need and which he must sell at a loss. It is still more customary to pay with cattle,

<sup>1</sup> Encycl. Brit., p. 899.

<sup>2</sup> Ruble—about 50c.

<sup>3</sup> W. G. Sumner, "The Yakuts," p. 65.

especially with horses, either slaughtered or living. The employers try to keep the employed in debt to themselves, and to this end even encourage them in vice—for instance, in gambling. Often an employer retains a portion of the wages and threatens not to pay it at all if the labourer does not consent to work for him still another year. It is not difficult for rich men to execute such an injustice as this, on account of the power which they possess in all Yakut communities. The scarcity of labourers is the cause of this conduct of the employers, but it also causes them, when once they have hired persons, to treat them well. In families in moderate circumstances, employés are taken in on an equal footing. In the north, even in the richest households, if no strangers are present, the employé sits at the table with the family. He takes part in the conversation and in household proceedings. His intercourse with the members of the family is simple and free from constraint. The Yakuts are generally polite in their intercourse, and do not like haughtiness. Employés expect the customary courtesy.”<sup>1</sup>

“The Yakuts dislike to hire themselves out for wages. They return to independence if the least possibility offers. For those who are poor the struggle for independence is so hard that it is useless to talk about their laziness or lack of forethought. If they have less than one and a half head of cattle per soul, they suffer from hunger nearly all their lives. When dying of hunger, they refrain from slaughtering an animal, from fear of losing their independence. There are cases in which the authorities have forced people to slaughter their cattle that they might be saved from death by starvation. Hunger periods occur in every year, during which two-thirds of the Yakut population suffer from semi-starvation for a longer or shorter time. This period is not longer than a few weeks for those whose cattlé were tolerably well nourished, so that in spring they quickly recovered their vigour, or for those who have such a number of cows that the latter produce calves at different times. The poor, however, suffer hunger for months, during which they live by the alms of their more fortunate neighbors. For them the most interesting subject of conversation is, Whose cow has calved? or, Whose cow will soon do so? Sometimes it happens that all the cows in a certain neighborhood calve at the same time; then, if there is in that district no tillage, or if the grain harvest has failed, famine ensues. Poor people when asked how they managed to live through those frightful months said. ‘We go to bed and cover ourselves with the coverlet.’ They drink brick-tea and a decoction of various herbs, and eat splinters of larch or pine, if they still have a stock of them. They cannot obtain them in winter. No axe could then split the wood, which is frozen to the hardness of stone. Where they plant grain, and the harvest is fair, the circumstances are less stringent. On the whole, therefore, the

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, p. 66.

dependence on chance is almost tragical. If things that must be purchased rise in price to the slightest degree, if one neighbor has deceived another, or the merchant has cheated in weight, or if calves have died, any of these incidents come as heavy blows upon the barely established equilibrium of the family budget. A few such blows throw the household into the abyss of debt, from which it rarely, or with great exertion, emerges. Two-thirds of the families are in debt; one half of them for small amounts which can be repaid, but the other half are hopelessly indebted, the debts consuming the income year by year. Even amongst those who are called rich, the expenditure rarely surpasses two or three hundred rubles per year, and this they cannot win without hired labour, because the care of the herds which are large enough to produce this amount far surpasses the power of an average Yakut family; therefore, only a large one, with well combined forces, can get along without hired labour. There are but few such families, and any co-operative organization is strange to the Yakuts. They prefer to work individually at their personal risk and chances."<sup>1</sup>

"In former times, when the chief wealth of the Yakuts consisted in droves of horses, the size and the conditions of subdivision or combination of the *sib* groups were entirely different. In that distant time we must believe that the consumption on the spot of products which had been obtained from the droves, or from hunting, served as the external condition of the existence and size of a *sib* group. Many traditions point to this fact. For instance, they tell us that if a Yakut slaughters an animal, the viscera, fat, and entrails are divided into portions of different size and worth, and distributed to the neighbors, who having learned that the slaughtering was to take place, generally take turns in visiting the owner. To fail to give any neighbour a share is to make an enemy. To pass anyone over purposely is equivalent to a challenge, and will put an end to friendly relations between families. We are convinced of the antiquity of this custom by tradition, and by its dying out nowadays. That it was a *sib* custom, we are convinced by certain usages at marriages and ceremonies of reconciliation. Distributions of meat are now a part of marriage ceremonies, and the chief dishes served at marriages consist of meat. The formulas of language employed in connection with this use of meat are reminders that the ceremony has created relationships between the participants.

"The strength of this custom was proved by a case observed by the author, who saw the gladness of a good-for-nothing fellow, who up to that time had done nothing but receive large shares, but who suddenly, by chance, drove a fat wild reindeer into a swamp, and so in his turn was enabled to make presents to his neighbours of portions of meat. No comparison would do justice to the self-satisfaction of this individual, when he at last served

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, p. 67.

up the game which he had won. He reserved for himself almost nothing. Other things which are subject to immediate consumption, and can be distributed into small portions, are shared in the same way, especially dainties, like sugar, cookies, or other rarity. Vodka is always divided amongst all who are present, even the children getting a drop. Tobacco also is subject to this custom. It is not degrading but honourable to receive a gift of food from one who is eating, especially if he is an honoured person. It is a violation of etiquette to give little to a rich man and much to a poor man. The opposite is the rule. If one man's cow calves earlier than those of the others, custom requires that he shall share cream and milk with those neighbours who at that time have none."<sup>1</sup>

**HOUSES.** "The largest number of settlements contain four or five huts, with twenty or thirty souls. Occasionally one is met with in which there are forty or fifty huts, and some hundreds of souls. The winter houses for the most part stand separately, and at some distance from each other, but near to the hay-stacks. In this detail the influence of the later economic system dependent upon hay is to be seen. The summer dwellings, on the other hand, seem to represent more nearly the ancient mode of life. The summer group consists of many huts which stand quite close together, although not apparently in order, but distributed according to the convenience of water and the pleasantness of the place. They are distributed so that the *sibs* stand together, which is probably an ancient feature."<sup>2</sup>

**MARRIAGE.** "The greatest part of the expense of a wedding falls on the groom. It is an essential part of the payment for the bride. The expense varies from a few rubles to two thousand rubles; the average is perhaps one hundred rubles. This expenditure would be beyond the means of the majority, if it were not that a large part of it comes back under the form of the bride's dower. If the total payment of the groom be divided into its parts, the part spent for the entertainment is spent by the groom without return; but the payment to the parents of the bride, and the gifts to her relatives, are restored in the gift with her. She brings household furniture, garments, silver articles, the stipulated number of mares and cows, corresponding to the number of animals contributed by the groom. She also brings colts and calves voluntarily contributed by her parents and not mentioned in the contract. She also brings gifts in the shape of meat and butter. Each wooden cup which she brings ought to contain a little butter. She also brings one fox skin and nine ermine skins, or at least one ermine skin. This is hung up over the bed where the unmarried women sleep. Later it is carried into the store-house, where it is carefully preserved until the first child is born; then they carry it into the wood and give it to the shaman. At any rate it disappears.

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, pp. 68-69.

<sup>2</sup> The Yakuts, p. 72.

“ Either under pretence of getting ready the bride's outfit, or on account of her youth and inexperience, the parents do not give their daughter to her husband immediately after the marriage, even if there has been a religious marriage, and the bride-price has been paid, and they have agreed to do this soon. Formerly the delay was often four or five years, and the custom of marrying children, even when very young, existed still earlier. During all the delay, the husband visits his wife at his leisure, but every time he ought to bring a gift to the wife's parents, a quarter or two of meat, a fox skin, or some other present. These gifts are a very unwelcome addition to the bride-price. When the time comes for the bride to go to her husband's house, she is very coldly received by his relatives if she brings less than was expected. If she brings less than was agreed upon, quarrels arise. Often there is a complete rupture, if the marriage has not taken place in church. In the latter case, they boycott her and she suffers all kinds of petty household persecutions which poison her existence.

“ The bride-price is shared by the parents, older brothers, uncles, and guardians of the bride, and, in the case of orphan working girls, by the master. Each gets something, be it ever so little, as a recognition of surrender by him of a claim on the woman. Not a single well-bred Yakut girl would consent to go to her husband without a bride-price. She would be degraded in her own eyes and according to the views of her people. It would mean that she was not worth any price, was friendless, or an outcast. It can be understood, therefore, that the Yakut women look down upon the Russian women, who, as they say, pay somebody to take them. Even young widows who have returned to their families are paid for, though at a lower rate than maidens. Older widows who have lived for a time independently with a minor son, or as work-women, marry without a bride-price; but the Yakuts have an original comment on this. They say that ‘ she wanted to exploit herself,’ or they say that she had been paid for once, and that if she marries again, nobody loses anything. The author asked one of them, ‘ Who lost anything when a maiden was married?’ ‘ The parents,’ said he. ‘ They had the trouble and expense of rearing her. They ought to obtain an equivalent for that. Besides that, they lose a worker out of the house. How is it that you Russians do not understand that?’ ‘ But,’ said the author, ‘ if a son is married, they get nothing and even give him something.’ ‘ The son is another thing,’ was the reply. ‘ In the first place, his labour produces more for his parents before his marriage, and then he doesn't go away; he remains in the same *sib*; he is our man; he will bear his share of taxes and burdens.’ This presents the current view of this matter among them. ‘ We fed and reared,’ they say, ‘ and others are to get the benefit. We will take something for the expenditure.’ ”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, pp. 84-85.

“ To accomplish a betrothal, three male relatives of the groom go on horseback to the house of the desired girl. Upon entering this, they sit down in the place of honour, where they sit talking about different matters, and watching what goes on in the house for one or two days. Then they pack up their things and place them on their horses, and when quite ready to leave on their journey, they return into the house. If the groom has come with them, he now stays outside. The go-betweens sit down again and wait awhile. Then the oldest of them, in silence, throws upon the table the skin of a fox. Then the father of the bride puts on his cap and sits down behind the table in the place where he sits at the wedding, and asks them what they want. They in turn, calling the bride a young mare, or a valuable beast, conduct a negotiation, asking whether she is for sale. When they get an affirmative reply, they agree upon the amount of the bride-price, the dower, the time of the wedding, the time when the groom shall have his wife, the mode of paying the bride-price, and all the details. All is negotiated with great pains in order to avoid future disputes. Then the guests speedily depart. Sometimes fox skins, vodka, and money are left on the table when they go out for the first time; and if, when they return, they see that these things have been taken away, they proceed to negotiate the terms. The bride has a very small share in this negotiation. Sometimes they ask her whether she is willing, but this is a modern innovation. If a man meets with a refusal of the girl he asks for, he usually insists that another shall be given to him in the same house, if there is another there. The Yakuts consider it an injury to meet with a refusal, and especially in the case of a proposal of marriage. They think it improper to send the go-betweens, under any circumstances whatsoever, within a year to a girl who has given a refusal to a man.”<sup>1</sup>

At the time of the wedding the groom with his friends rides to the house of the bride at dawn leading two horses laden with fresh meat. When they arrive they are received with great ceremony and led into the house. The groom is the last one to enter, and he is taken to a corner of the room where he is put in a chair facing the wall. The bride is in the opposite corner in a similar position, and they both stay there until the ceremony is over. For three days there is much feasting and games in which the bride and groom do not participate.

“ It is not until the fourth day, after dinner, that the relatives of the groom prepare to depart for good. When they have mounted their horses, a big wooden cup of kumiss is served to each one of them, and then the whole *cortege*, in the same order in which it had arrived, the father of the groom at the head, and the groom last, are escorted by the relatives of the bride around the three hitching posts for horses, which are set in the middle of the court. They go about these posts three times in the course of the sun.

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, p. 87.

Each time, when they have completed a circuit, they stop, and each horseman pours out kumiss from his cup on the mane of his horse. When they have drunk the remainder of the kumiss and returned the cups to the escort, they depart at a gallop through the open gateway. The solemn ceremony is then considered ended, yet this is only half of the wedding. It is true that from that time the bride and groom consider themselves man and wife, but not until the whole bride-price has been paid, i. e., sometimes after two or three years, does the husband conduct his wife to his own house. Then they again celebrate the feasts three days long, in the same manner, the groom sitting again for the whole time in one corner, with his face to the wall, and the bride in another, behind a curtain of soft leather."<sup>1</sup>

**CHILDREN.** The average number of children for each woman is ten although sometimes they go as high as twenty-two. However, few of the children live, for the conditions of life are so hard that it is difficult to rear more than three or four.

"When a child begins to sit up, which takes place at the end of three months, it is no longer called a baby, but has another class-name. In ancient times they gave it its first name at this point of time; it got a second one when it could draw a bow. Their babies creep at six months, and stand and walk at a year. So after they are six months old, they crawl all over the floor of the house. The Yakuts think that a child which does not understand human language understands the talk of the fire, the singing of the birds, the language of the beasts, lifeless objects and spirits; but that he loses this gift when he acquires human speech. This superstition may be due to the habit of children to stay about the fire, the warmest and pleasantest place in the house, and also the most interesting, where a child stands staring at the flames with his big black eyes and listening to the hissing and snapping of the fire. Their children look the prettiest to Europeans when they are from five to ten years old, because then they are most like our children; but then they are by no means sprightly and enterprising, and they are excessively obedient."<sup>2</sup>

**PARENTS AND CHILDREN.** "There is no such thing as any patriarchal relationship, or any deep-rooted or cultivated feeling of respect for the old, amongst the Yakuts. A young Yakut said, 'They not only do not feed, nor honour, nor obey, but they scold and often beat the old people. With my own eyes, I have more than once seen Yakuts, poor and rich, bad and good, beat their fathers and mothers.' They behave especially badly with decrepit and feeble-minded parents. Their chief object in dealing with such is to wrest from them any bits of property they may still retain. Thus, as the old people become more and more defenseless, they are treated worse and worse. It was no better in the ancient times. Force, the coarse force of the fist,

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> The Yakuts, p. 80.

or the force of hunger, rules in the modern Yakut family, and seems to indicate the servile origin of that family. Once the author saw how a weak old man of seventy beat with a stick his forty-year old son, who was in good health, rich, and a completely independent householder, who had just been elected to an office in the *sib*. The son stood quietly and did not even dare to evade the blows, but that man still had an important amount of property at his disposition, and he ruled the family by the fear that he could deprive any recalcitrant one of a share in the inheritance.

"In well-to-do families, where there is a great quantity of cattle, or where the right to large advantages from land, or the possession of well-established trade, provides an opportunity to win from hired labour, and so an important revenue is obtained, independently of personal labour the rule of the father and mother as proprietors, especially the rule of the father, is strengthened and maintained for a long time, namely, to the moment when the old people become decrepit and lose the capacity to comprehend the simplest things. Generally they die before that time. This state of things is maintained by the spread of Russian ideas and laws. In the old-fashioned Yakut family, the economy of which is founded almost entirely on cattle-breeding, and in which constant personal supervision is required, thus making personal strength and initiative indispensable, the moment of the transfer of rule into the hands of the son is reached much earlier. It occurs still earlier in poor families which live exclusively by hand-labour and by the industry of the strongest and best endowed. The old people strive against this tendency in vain. The young people naturally strive to avail themselves as fully as possible of the results of their labour, and as soon as they feel strong enough, they begin to struggle for their rights. The parents are dependent on their sons, who could go away to earn wages. Hence they say, 'It is more advantageous for us Yakuts, in this frozen country of ours, to have many children than to have much money and cattle. Children are our capital, if they are good. It is hard to get good labourers, even for large wages, but a son when he grows up, is a labourer who costs nothing; nevertheless, it is hard to rear children.' The author knew of cases in which wives put up with the presence of mistresses in the house, considering that an inevitable consequence of their own childlessness. The death of children is accepted coldly in populous districts, but in the thinly settled ones is sincerely bewailed. Sometimes they take to drink or to idleness when they have lost children.

"The greatest number of suicides are old people who fear a lonely old age. The treatment they receive fully accounts for this."<sup>1</sup>

**POSITIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN.** "In a family in which the rights and powers have been reduced to equilibrium,

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, pp. 76-77.



so that all the relations of the members are established, the dominion of the head, whoever he is, over the labour and the property of the members is unlimited. The organization is really servile. Especially pitiful is the position of the women, who play no rôle in the *sib*, and therefore can expect no protection from anybody. The author advised a woman to appeal to the *sib*, when she complained that her husband exploited her labour and that of her half-grown son: that he was extravagant and wasteful, so that he was likely to reduce them to pauperism. 'The head!' said she, 'how often have I complained to him! he listens and says nothing, and after that my husband is still more quarrelsome and more perverse.' Another woman said, 'The man is the master; it is necessary to obey him; he works abroad and we at home.' This work abroad consists for the most part in taking part in the village assemblies and in constant loafing from house to house. It is true that the man acquires information about wages and prices; but he also keeps to himself the monopoly of all external relations, and even for the absence of any of the housemates without his consent he demands a strict account. To acquire an extra gain, win food or money, or earn something by outside work is considered more desirable than to follow heavy daily labour which would maintain the life of the family from day to day. If the head of the household has grown-up children, the amount of work which he does is insignificant. He works like the others only at the hay-harvest; the rest of the time he wanders about, looking out, it is true, for the external interests of the family to which his care is now restricted, although formerly it extended to the *sib*. Inside the house he is treated with almost slavish respect and consideration. His presence puts an end to cheerfulness, the excuse for which is that he must maintain respect."<sup>1</sup>

**RELIGION.** The Yakuts are nominally Christian although they still cling to many of their superstitious beliefs.

"The Yakuts have a custom of making presents to their acquaintances before death. They give away cattle, chattels and more rarely, clothing and money. They think that washing, the corpse is obligatory; but they put it off till the last thing in order to avoid superfluous trouble and busying themselves unpleasantly with the corpse. The dying person is often dressed in his grave-clothes while still alive. These clothes, even among the poorest people, are kept in store for this purpose; so that they are new or scarcely worn at all. One thing about which the dying Yakut really cares is that some domestic animal may be slaughtered immediately after his death, in order that, riding on it, or with it, he may accomplish his journey into the lower world. With this purpose for men, they slaughter oxen and horses, and for women, cows, young ones if the wealth of the deceased admits of a choice, and of course they select by preference beasts of

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, p. 78.

burden on which one can ride, and above all, fat ones. The spirits of the dead will have to drive before them cows and calves with a switch; or to lead them by ropes tied around the horns, which is attended with some inconvenience. Poor people kill the most worthless of the animals which they have. In the north, they often kill reindeer, but whether they kill sledge-dogs, the author does not know; he thinks not. The labourers who make the coffins and dig the graves, the literary persons who read the Psalter over the deceased, and the neighbours who visit the house at this time, are fed with the meat of the slaughtered animals. In the north, where in general all their customs have been better preserved, and where now they are observed with greater accuracy, even the very poorest family try to provide for the funeral feast of a member some animal, even if it is only a sucking calf. Sometimes they sacrifice for this purpose the last miserable cow.”<sup>1</sup>

“When the coffin is ready, they put the body in it and cover it over with white cotton cloth. In the left hand they place a passport (they use this word), in order that the ghost may be received into paradise, where it will live as it did on earth. If it had no passport, those of the other world would say to it, ‘Friend, you have gone astray,’ and it would have to go on beyond the forty-four lands where the demons live. On the third day, in the morning, they either carry the coffin, or place it on an ox, never on a horse, in order to bring it to the grave. Nobody accompanies it but the bearers and the grave-digger, and these make haste to finish their task as quickly as possible and hurry away home. When returning they would not for anything look backwards, but when they come into the gateway of the enclosure, or the door of the house, they themselves go, and they lead the beasts by which the corpse was carried, across a bonfire, lighted by them, built of the chips and shavings left over from the coffin, and also of the straw on which the corpse had lain. The spades, sleigh, and in general all that which was used in any way whatever for the interment, they break up and leave on the grave elevation. If they bury a child, then they hang up there on a tree his cradle, and they leave there his play-things. Formerly they left on the grave food, furniture, tools, dishes, and other objects indispensable in life. Now that custom has died out. In the north, on the ancient graves, the author often found rusted and broken kettles, knives, spear-points, stirrups, and rings from harnesses and saddles—all broken, punctured and spoiled, with the purpose, as the natives explain, that the dead might not be able with them to harm the living.”<sup>2</sup>

**THE OLD.** “A local tradition is met with that in ancient times if an old person became extremely decrepit, or if anyone became ill beyond the hope of recovery, such person generally begged his beloved children or relatives to bury him. Then the

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> The Yakuts, p. 99.

neighbours were called together, the best and the fattest cattle were slaughtered, and they feasted for three days, during which time the one who was to die, dressed in his best travelling clothes, sat in the foremost place, and received from all who were present marks of respect and the best pieces of food. On the third day the relative chosen by him led him into the wood and unexpectedly thrust him into a hole previously prepared. They then left him together with vessels, tools and food, to die of hunger. Sometimes an old man and wife are buried together; sometimes an ox or horse was buried alive with them; and sometimes a saddled horse was tied up to a post set in the ground near by, and left there to die of hunger. This tradition is met with on the Alden River.”<sup>1</sup>

**SHAMANS.** The Shaman or medicine-man is a very important member of the community for it is he who is able to protect the people from the influence of the evil spirits. Every Shaman must have a tutelary or personal guardian spirit.

“The Shamans cure all diseases, but especially such as are mysterious, being nervous affections, such as hysterics, mental derangement, convulsions, and St. Vitus’ dance; also impotence, sterility, puerperal fever, etc.; then diseases of the internal organs, especially such as cause the patient to groan, scream, and toss about; then also wounds, broken and decayed bones, headache, inflammation of the eyes, rheumatic fever; besides these also all epidemic diseases and consumption; but this last they treat only with a view to alleviation, considering it incurable. They refuse to treat diarrhoea, scarlet fever, measles, small-pox, syphilis, scrofula, and leprosy, which they call ‘the great disease.’ They are especially afraid of small-pox, and take care not to perform their rites in a house where a case of it has recently occurred. They call small-pox and measles ‘old women,’ and say that they are two Russian sisters dressed in Russian fashion, who go to visit in person those houses where they have marked their victims. All diseases come from evil spirits who have taken possession of men. Methods of cure are always of the same kind, and consist in propitiating or driving away the uninvited guest. The simplest method of cure is by fire. A boy whose wounded finger became inflamed, came to the conclusion, which the bystanders shared, that a *yor* had established itself in the finger. Desiring to drive it out, he took a burning coal and began to apply it around the place while blowing upon it. When the burned flesh began to blister, and then burst with a little crackle, then the curious group which had crowded around him flew back with a cry of terror, and the wounded boy, with a smile of self-satisfaction, said, ‘You saw how he jumped out.’ A man who had the rheumatism had his body marked all over with deep burnings. As soon as he had any pain, he applied fire to the seat of it.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> The Yakuts, pp. 104–105.

**FIRE.** "The spirit of fire is a grey-haired, garrulous, restless, eternally fussy old man. What he is whispering and shuffling about so perpetually few understand. The Shaman understands it, and also the little child whose ear has not yet learned to distinguish human speech. The fire understands well what they are saying and doing round about it; therefore, it is dangerous to hurt the feelings of the fire, to scold it, to spit upon it, to urinate on it. It will not do to cast into the fire rubbish which adheres to the shoes, for that would cause headache. It is sinful to poke the fire with an iron instrument, and the wooden poker with which they do stir it up must be burned every week, or there will be bad luck in the house. A good house-mistress always takes care that the fire may be satisfied with her, and she casts into it a bit of everything which is prepared by its aid. No one ever knows what kind of a fire is burning on the hearth in his house; therefore, it is well to conciliate it from time to time, by little gifts. The fire loves, above all, fat, butter and cream. They sprinkle these often upon it. They told the author, in the northern region, about a people who were said to live on the islands of the Arctic Ocean and who had no knowledge of fire."<sup>1</sup>

**GOVERNMENT.** "Mass meetings, or popular assemblies, are held, in summer, in the open air, not far from the meeting-house of the *sib*. The oldest and most influential sit in the first rank, on the bare ground, with their legs crossed under them. In the second rank sit or kneel the independent but less wealthy heads of households. In the third rank are the youth, children, poor man, and often women, for the most part standing, in order the better to see and hear. In general it is the first row which decides affairs; the second row sometimes offers its remarks and amendments, but no more. The third rank listens in silence. Sometimes the passions are aroused, and they all scream at once, but the decision of the question is always submitted to the first rank. It conducts the deliberation. The orators come from its ranks. Oratory is highly esteemed, and they have some talented orators. The first rank are distinguished for riches and energy. They can submit or withhold questions; but decisions are never considered binding until confirmed by a mass meeting. According to their traditions, in ancient times, a prominent rôle in these assemblies was played by old men, who must, however, have distinguished themselves, and won prestige, by good sense, knowledge and experience. They decided questions according to the customs, and gave advice when the *sib* was in any difficulty."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Yakuts, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup> The Yakuts, p. 73.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### ESKIMOS

**SITUATION AND ENVIRONMENT.** The Eskimos<sup>1</sup> inhabit the northern portion of North America. Their territory extends from the west coast of Behring Strait across Alaska, the north coast of North America, the North American groups of Arctic Islands and both the west and east coasts of Greenland. It is largely a land of ice, snow and water, although in the southern portion the short hot summer enables the people to raise a very few vegetables in the stony soil.

We are placing this discussion of the Eskimos under the Mongolian heading because of the great similarity which exists between the people of northern Asia and northern America, not only in their physical features, but also in their language and civilization. While it is evident that all the peoples of America are closely related, yet those of the more temperate climate do not bear as close a relationship to their northern brothers as do these people to those on the eastern shores of Behring Strait.

**HISTORY.** "The likeness between all the different tribes of Eskimos as well as their secluded position with respect to other peoples, and the perfection of their implements, might be taken to indicate that they are of a very old race, in which everything has stiffened into definite forms, which can now be but slowly altered. Other indications, however, seem to conflict with such a hypothesis, and render it more probable that the race was originally a small one, which did not until a comparatively late period develop to the point at which we now find it, and spread over the countries which it at present inhabits.

"If it should seem difficult to understand, at first sight, how they could have spread in a comparatively short time over these wide tracts of country without moving in great masses, as in the case of larger migrations, we need only reflect that their present inhospitable abiding-places can scarcely have been inhabited, at any rate permanently, before they took possession of them, and that, therefore, they had nothing to contend with except nature itself.

"Dr. H. Rink, who has made Greenland and its people the study of his life, and is beyond comparison the greatest authority on the subject, holds that the Eskimo implements and weapons—at any rate, for the greater part—may be traced to America. He regards it as probable that the Eskimos were once a race dwelling in the interior of Alaska, where there are still a considerable number of inland Eskimos, and that they have migrated thence to the coasts of the ice-sea. He further maintains that

<sup>1</sup> The word Eskimo means "Eaters of raw meat."

their speech is most closely connected with the primitive dialects of America, and that their legends and customs recall those of the Indians.

"One point among others, however, in which the Eskimos differ from the Indians is the use of dog-sledges. With the exception of the Incas of Peru, who use the llama as the beast of burden, no American aborigines employed animals either for drawing or for carrying. In this, then, the Eskimos more resemble the races of the Asiatic polar regions."<sup>1</sup>

**PHYSICAL FEATURES.** The Eskimo has a yellowish brown color "and even among the half-breeds a certain tinge of brownish yellow is unmistakable. This natural darkness of the skin, however, is generally much intensified, especially in the case of men and old women, by a total lack of cleanliness. The method of washing practiced by the men is to 'scrape the sweat off their faces with a knife' ".<sup>2</sup> The mothers sometimes clean their children by licking them before putting them into their cradles.

He has a round, broad, flat face, high cheekbones, small Mongolian eyes; flat nose, and broad mouth. His teeth are good, but owing to the character of the food they are worn down to the gums in old age. His head is mesocephalic and the hair is long, black and straight with a small amount on the face and almost none on the body. The height of the men is about 5 ft. 2 in. while that of the women is 5 ft.

"The men have broad shoulders, strong, muscular arms, and a good chest; but on the other hand one notices that their thighs are comparatively narrow, and their legs not particularly strong. When they get up in years, therefore, they are apt to have an uncertain gait, with knees slightly bent. This defective development of the lower extremities must be ascribed for the most part, to the daily confinement in the cramped *kaiak*.<sup>3</sup>"<sup>4</sup>

The people grow old in appearance at a comparatively early age. The skin becomes very much wrinkled, the eyes bleary, and hair scanty.

**CHARACTER.** Before the Eskimos came into contact with the white race they possessed many virtues which have since been lost, although even at the present time they maintain certain qualities which seem to be almost inborn. They have a different set of actions for members of their own group and for foreigners. They call themselves "the people" (Innuits) and hence they look at all others as interlopers who should be treated as such.

They are truthful and honest in their dealings with each other, but towards the other races these qualities do not predominate. The reason for this is not hard to find. The first Europeans that came, plundered the natives, maltreated the women, and even took some of them back to Europe as prisoners.

<sup>1</sup> Nansen—"Eskimo Life," pp. 6-8.

<sup>2</sup> Nansen, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Kaiak*—Skin boat.

<sup>4</sup> Nansen, p. 20.

Thus the Eskimos had little reason from the beginning to regard the foreigners as their friends. However, since that time much of the contact has been more friendly and the Eskimos are treating the whites almost as they do those of their own color. Still they are not loath to steal a few things which they think will not be missed.

"Fighting and brutalities of that sort are unknown among them, and murder is very rare. They hold it atrocious to kill a fellow-creature; therefore war is in their eyes incomprehensible and repulsive, a thing for which their language has no word; and soldiers and officers, brought up to the trade of killing they regard as mere butchers."<sup>1</sup>

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** "The Eskimo more than anyone else, belongs to the coast and the sea. He dwells by the sea, upon it he seeks his subsistence, it gives him all the necessities of his life, over it he makes all his journeys whether in his skin-canoes in summer, or in his dog-sledges when it is ice-bound in winter. The sea is thus the strongest influence in the life of the Eskimo."<sup>2</sup>

**BOATS.** The Kaiak or skin boat is very necessary for every Eskimo living on the sea. These boats, large enough for one man, are about eighteen feet long and eighteen inches broad at the widest part. The depth from top to bottom is about six inches. The frame of the boat is made of wood or bone covered with seal skin which has been carefully worked by the women. In the middle of the kaiak deck is a hole just big enough for one man to get in. The boat is propelled by a double bladed paddle.

In good weather the man wears a "half jacket" made of water-tight skin which fastens tightly to a ring around the opening of the boat and comes up to the armpits of the man. It is held in place by straps which go over his shoulders. Loose sleeves of skin are drawn over the hands and arms in order to keep the man dry.

In a heavy sea the man wears the "whole jacket." This is similar to the "half-jacket" in that it fits to the opening of the boat, but the upper part is longer and has a hood which goes over the head and fastens under the chin with drawing strings. The sleeves which are fastened to the jacket, are tied around the wrists. In this outfit it is possible for a man to go through the heaviest breakers and to capsize and right himself again without getting wet and without letting any water into the boat.

It takes a great deal of practice to become skilful in using the kaiak, and boys begin at a very early age under the tutelage of their fathers to master its difficulties. A man is not considered an expert until he has learned the art of righting himself after capsizing. The number of deaths every year of those who are unskilful is large.

<sup>1</sup> Nansen, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Nansen, p 3

**WEAPONS.** The Eskimo shows in perhaps no better way the adaptation to a very difficult environment than in the weapons which he uses for hunting. Wood is, of course, scarce for about all they get is that which is thrown up on the shore by the sea, and hence every bit is valuable and must be conserved with the greatest care. The spear or javelin, which is the chief weapon, is made in two parts, the shaft of wood and the head of bone. If the shaft and the head were fastened tightly together and the spear stuck in a bear or seal which escaped, it would mean that a very valuable piece of wood would be lost. To obviate the possibility of such an occurrence the shaft and the head are fastened so lightly together that when an animal is struck, the head of the spear detaches itself and stays in the animal, while the shaft falls to the ground or floats on the water and can thus be easily rescued.

The harpoon is used almost exclusively on the sea and is constructed with a few exceptions along the same lines as the spear. In the first place, it is a good deal heavier than the spear, and in the second place, the head is of different construction. "The upper end of the wooden shaft is fitted with a thick and strong plate of bone, on the top of which is fixed a long bone foreshaft—commonly made of walrus or narwhal tusk—which is fastened to the shaft by means of a joint of thongs, so that a strong pressure or blow from the side, instead of shattering the foreshaft, causes it to break off at the joint. This foreshaft fits exactly into a hole in the harpoon-head proper, which is made of bone, generally of walrus or narwhal tusk." The head is held temporarily to the shaft by a thong and to this is attached an inflated bladder of some animal. "When the harpoon strikes and the seal begins to plunge, the bone foreshaft instantly breaks off at the joint, and the harpoon-head, with the line and bladder attached to it, is thus loosened from the shaft, which floats up to the surface and is picked up by the owner, while the seal dashes away, dragging the line and bladder after it."<sup>1</sup>

Another weapon of importance is the bird-dart. The head is now of iron, but it used to be made of bone. There are fastened to the middle of the shaft three forward-slanting bone spikes. If the head of the dart does not strike the bird one of these spikes may.

All three of these weapons, the spear, the harpoon and the bird-dart, are hurled by means of a throwing stick very similar to those seen in other countries.

**HUNTING AND FISHING.** The hunting at sea is usually done by several men each in his own kaiak. They will spear three or four seals apiece and attaching a bladder to each to keep, it afloat, will drag them back to the village. The women come down to meet the returning hunters, for their work now begins. They take the seals onto the land, cut them up and prepare the skins for use.

<sup>1</sup> Nansen, pp. 35 ff.



Hunting or fishing from these kaiaks is dangerous business, for frequently the seal or walrus, in its dying struggles, attacks the man and either injures him or cuts the light skin of his boat so that he drowns.

In winter when the people are unable to go out in their boats, they hunt the seal by stalking. That is, they flop along the ice as the seals do until they get as near to the animal as possible and then hurl their spears. A seal has a hole in the ice beside which it sleeps. One peculiarity of this animal is that it sleeps for a few moments, then it raises its head, looks all around the horizon, and, if it sees no danger drops back on the ice again. However, the seal is able to see clearly only a very short distance and hence if the man keeps moving in a seal-like manner, the seal suspects nothing, and it is possible to get very near to it.

In hunting the polar bear one method is to freeze a coiled spring made of bone into a piece of meat and leave it on the ice. The bear swallows it, the heat of the stomach melts the meat, the spring flies out and tears the stomach of the bear so that it dies shortly.

**FOOD.** Meat and fish form the chief articles of diet of the Eskimo. These are eaten raw, frozen, boiled or dried. Frequently the meat is allowed to ferment or decompose before it is eaten. Seal and whale blubber are eaten raw. There is very little vegetable food to be obtained, and so to make up for this lack, they eat the contents of the reindeer's stomach with the greatest relish. This contains the finest moss and grasses. If a Greenlander kills a reindeer and is unable to carry the whole animal home with him he will cut out the stomach and take that. Another delicacy is the skin of the whale with a layer of blubber next to it. This is eaten raw and tastes like a mixture of oysters and nuts.

When the white people came in contact with the Eskimos they brought with them soap and candles, but instead of using these for the purposes intended, the natives ate them with great enjoyment. Coffee has been given to them by the whites and this they consume in great quantities, sometimes drinking four and five bowls a day.

"The Eskimos are enormous eaters; two will easily dispose of a seal at a sitting; and in Greenland, for instance, each individual has for his daily consumption, on an average,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. of flesh with blubber, and one lb. of fish, besides mussels, berries, seaweed, etc., to which in the Danish settlement may be added two oz. of imported food. Ten pounds of flesh, in addition to other food, is not uncommonly consumed in a day in time of plenty. A man will lie on his back and allow his wife to feed him with tit-bits of blubber and flesh until he is unable to move."<sup>1</sup>

**HOUSES.** The type of house depends upon the locality in which people are living. In the far north the houses are made

<sup>1</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica under Eskimo.

of snow and ice, while further south they are constructed from stone, dirt and even skins.

The snow house (iglu) is made from blocks 16 inches square and about six inches thick. They are laid in spirally ascending rows so as to form a dome-shaped vault. The entrance is through a long low passage which has a block of snow or the heavy skin of an animal hung over the entrance to keep out the cold. Light is admitted by a transparent piece of ice. Around the sides of the hut are seats made from blocks of ice, which, when covered with skins, form the beds.

Although the only heat in these huts comes from a floating-wick stone lamp which stands in the middle of the floor, yet the temperature of the room can be kept at about 70° F. This lamp is the most important article of furniture, for it not only gives the people heat and light but it also serves for cooking and drying the wet clothes. In Greenland the winter houses are made of stones and turf. They are about five or six feet above the level of the ground, and the floor is sunk several feet below.

"There is only one room in these houses, and in it several families generally live together—men and women, old and young. The roof is so low that a man of any stature can scarcely stand upright. The room forms an oblong quadrangle. Along the whole of the longer wall opposite the door, runs the chief sleeping bench, about six feet six inches in width, upon which sleep the married people, with grown up unmarried daughters and young boys and girls. Here they lie in a row, side by side, with their feet towards the wall and their heads out into the room.

"Unmarried men generally lie upon smaller benches under the windows, which are in the opposite long wall. The windows were formerly filled with gut-skin or some similar material, but nowadays on the west coast glass is commonly used.

"The house is entered through a long and narrow passage, partly dug out beneath the level of the ground, and, like the houses, walled with stones and turf. You descend into it from the level of the ground through a hole. It is as a rule, so low and narrow that one has to crouch one's way through it, and a large man finds it difficult enough to effect an entrance. From this passage, you enter the house through a little square opening, usually in the front long wall, which is closed by a door or trap-door.

"The purpose of this passage is to prevent the cold air from coming in and the warm air from escaping. It is to this end that it is made to lie lower than the house; by which means, too, a little ventilation is obtained, since, the heavy bad air, can, to some extent, sink down into it and escape. In Greenland houses of the old style, there are no fireplaces; they are warmed as well as lighted by train-oil lamps, which burn day and night. They are left burning all night through, not merely for the sake of warmth, but also because the Eskimos are exceedingly super-

stitious, and therefore afraid of even sleeping in darkness. You may hear them relate, as a proof of extreme poverty, that this family or that, poor things, have to sleep at night with no lamp burning."<sup>1</sup>

Civilization has introduced to these people fireplaces, stoves, iron pots and kettles which change to a large extent their mode of existence. Many of the people are now living in individual houses instead of several families in one, with the result that they are unable to pool their goods and hence poverty is more keenly felt.

During the summer months these stone huts were abandoned, the roofs knocked in so that the many undesirable visitors that had collected during the winter might be washed out, and the people took up their abode in skin tents.

**SUMMER.** Most of the families possessed skin boats known as women's-boats. These were about 40 feet long and got their name from the fact that they were rowed by the women while most of the men followed in their kaiaks, whole families would wander from one hunting ground to another during the summer, taking with them their tents, household utensils and dogs. They sometimes covered as much as 50 miles a day in these boats.

"By means of this habit of wandering, they escaped the evil effects of too great seclusion in separate villages; they met together and kept up intercourse with other people, so that there was all through the summer a certain life and traffic from which they reaped many benefits. Their minds were enlivened, interest in hunting was stimulated, and skill was developed in many different ways, to say nothing of the fact that the frequent changing of hunting-grounds brought much more game within their reach."<sup>2</sup>

But this is all changed now. Because of the great impoverishment brought about by the higher civilization, there are every year fewer hunters who can get enough skins to make a woman's boat and a tent, both of which are necessary for traveling.

"They are more and more forced to pass the whole year round in the unwholesome winter houses, which are, of course, mere hot-beds for bacteria and all sorts of contagious diseases, while the men are thus unable to change their hunting-grounds, and must keep to the same spots year in and year out."<sup>2</sup>

**DOGS AND SLEDGES.** The dog is the greatest friend the Eskimo has, for by it he is able to travel long distances over the ice and snow. The wealth of a man is largely determined by the number of dogs he possesses. A good team consists of about 12 dogs, and when they are well trained and the snow is level they can travel from 60 to 90 miles a day. The dogs are fastened to the sledges by means of a harness of thongs and they are guided by a long whip and a single rein. The sledges consist of two runners made from wood or bone and fastened together by cross

<sup>1</sup> Nansen, pp. 78 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Nansen, pp. 87-88.

pieces of the same materials. These are bound by leather thongs. One man sits on the sledge, or, if it is laden with goods, he runs along side, guiding the dogs with a whip.

**CLOTHING.** "The costumes of the men and women are very similar. The upper garment is made of bird-skins [or seal-skins] with the feathers or down turned inwards, is shaped very much like our woolen jerseys, and, like them, is drawn over the head. It is provided with a hood, used as a head-covering in the open air; at other times it is thrown back, and forms, with its upstanding selvage of black dog-skin, a sort of collar around the neck. At the wrists, too, this garment is edged with black dog-skin, like a showy fur overcoat among us. Outside of this an outer vest is worn, now for the most part made of cotton. Trousers of sealskin or of the European cloth, are worn upon the legs; on the feet a peculiar sort of shoes, made of sealskin. These consist of two layers, an interior sock of skin with the fur turned inwards, and an exterior shoe of hairless, watertight hide. In the sole, between the sock and outer shoe, is placed a layer of straw or bladder sedge."<sup>1</sup>

The costumes of the women differ in the amount of decoration and the number of ornaments upon them. Where the man's vest is a dark color that of the woman will be red, blue or green. Around their necks many of the women wear necklaces of glass beads, and in slits in their ears and lips put plugs of glass, bone or shells.

In the past it was the custom of the people to remove all of their clothes with the exception of a loin cloth when they went from the cold out-of-doors into the hot houses.

"This light raiment was, of course, very wholesome; for the many layers of skin in the outdoor dress greatly impeded transpiration and it was therefore a natural impulse which led the Eskimo to throw them off in the warm rooms, where they would be particularly unsanitary. When the Europeans came to the country, however, this free-and-easy custom offended their sense of propriety, and the missionaries preached against it. Thus it happens that the national indoor dress has been abolished on the west coast of Greenland. Whether this had led to an improvement in morality, I cannot say—I have my doubts. That it has not been conducive to sanitation, I can unhesitatingly declare."<sup>2</sup>

**TATTOO.** Tattooing of the face and body is quite common among the Eskimo although it is done more by the women than by the men. Usually the person is very young when the operation is performed.

**MARRIAGE.** The pure-bred Eskimo usually marries as soon as he can provide for a wife; but it is not love in our sense of the word which stimulates him, but rather the desire to have some one who will help to prepare his skins, make his clothes and tend

<sup>1</sup> Nansen, pp. 22 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Nansen, pp. 26-27.

to his house. It frequently happens that a boy marries before the age of puberty.

“Marriage in Greenland was, in earlier times a very simple matter. When a man had a mind to a girl, he went to her house or tent, seized her by the hair or wherever he could best get hold of her, and dragged her without further ceremony home to his house, where her place was assigned her upon the sleeping bench. The bridegroom would sometimes give her a lamp and a new water-bucket, or something of that sort, and that concluded the matter. In Greenland, however, as in other parts of the world, good taste demanded that the lady in question should on no account let it appear that she was a consenting party, however favorably disposed towards her wooer she might be in her heart. As a well-conducted bride among us feels it her duty to weep as she passes up the church, so the Eskimo bride was bound to struggle against her captor, and to wail and bemoan herself as much as ever she could. If she was a lady of the very highest breeding, she would weep and ‘carry on’ for several days, and even run away home again from her husband’s house. If she went too far in her care for proprieties, it would sometimes happen, we are told, that the husband, unless he was already tired of her, would scratch her a little on the soles of the feet, so that she could not walk; and before the sores were healed, she was generally a contented housewife.

“The simple method of marriage above described is still the only one known upon the east coast of Greenland, and a good deal of violence is sometimes employed in the carrying off of the bride. The lady’s relations, however, stand quite unmoved and look on. It is all a private matter between the parties, and the Greenlander’s love of a good understanding with his fellows makes him chary of mixing himself up in the affairs of others.

“It sometimes happens, of course, that the young lady really objects to her wooer; in that case she continues her resistance until she either learns to possess her soul in patience, or until her captor gives her up.”

“Among the heathen Greenlanders, divorce is as simple an affair as marriage. When a man grows tired of his wife—the reverse is of rarer occurrence—he need only, says Dalager, ‘lie apart from her on the sleeping benches, without speaking a word. She at once takes the hint,’ and next morning gathers all her garments together and quietly returns to her parents’ house, trying, as well as she can, to appear indifferent.”

“On the east coast, if a man can keep more than one wife, he takes another; most of the good hunters, therefore, have two, but never more. It appears that in many cases the first wife does not like to have a rival; but sometimes it is she that suggests the second marriage, in order that she may have help in her household work. Another motive may also come into play. ‘I once asked a married woman,’ says Dalager, ‘why her

husband had taken another wife?" "I asked him to myself," she replied, "for I'm tired of bearing children." "<sup>1</sup>

"Among the primitive Eskimos the wife seems practically to have been regarded as the husband's property. It sometimes happens on the east coast that a formal bargain and sale precedes marriage, the bridegroom paying the father a harpoon, or something of the sort, for the privilege of wedding his lovely daughter. Sometimes, on the other hand, the father will pay a hunter of credit and renown to take his daughter off his hands, and the daughter is bound to marry at her father's bidding. Moreover, it often occurs on the east coast that two hunters agree to exchange wives for a longer or shorter period—sometimes for good."<sup>2</sup>

**CHILDREN.** "On the average, the pure-bred Greenlanders are not prolific—two, three, or four children to each marriage is the general rule, though there are instances of families of six or eight or even more."<sup>3</sup> This may be due to the fact that frequently children are not weaned until they are four or five years old and hence the number of children which a mother can bear is limited. Another reason for the few children is that the hard environment will not support a larger population. Twins are uncommon.

"The heathen Greenlanders kill deformed children and those which are so sickly as to seem unlikely to live; those too, whose mother dies in child-birth. This they do, as a rule, by exposing the child or throwing it into the sea. However cruel it may sound, it is nevertheless one from compassion, and it is undeniably reasonable, for under such hard conditions as those of Greenland, we cannot wonder that people are unwilling to bring up offspring which can never be of any use, and can only help to diminish the common store of sustenance."<sup>4</sup>

**MORALS.** Before the Europeans came in contact with these people the morals were of a very much higher order than they are at the present time. Among the Christian Eskimos it is not regarded as any particular disgrace for an unmarried girl to have children, especially if the father is a European. On the other hand it is said by a man who knew the native Eskimos before the higher civilization was brought to them, "during the fifteen years I was in Greenland, I know of only two or three unmarried girls who gave birth to children; for this they regarded as a great disgrace."<sup>4</sup>

However, the strict morality before marriage was relaxed after marriage, for then the sexes were practically free to choose whom they desired.

"The morals above described seem to us very bad on the whole; but it does not follow that the Eskimos share this feeling.

<sup>1</sup> Nansen, pp. 139 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Nansen, pp. 147-148.

<sup>3</sup> Nansen, pp. 150 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Hans Egede "New Perilustration" quoted by Nansen, p. 166.

We should beware how we fix ourselves at one point of view, and unsparingly condemn ideas and practices which the experience of many generations has developed among another people, however much they conflict with our own. There may be underlying reasons which do not at once meet the eye, and which place the whole matter in a very different light.”<sup>1</sup>

**AMUSEMENTS.** The pleasures of the Eskimos are very few, due probably to the hard condition of the environment in which they are living and to the cramped conditions in their houses. In the north where the people live in snow huts enjoyment is gotten from making up poetry and singing songs about various brave deeds accomplished on their hunting expeditions. In Greenland to the poetry and songs is added the dance, for the houses are there large enough to permit of this.

One dance of theirs, the drum-dance, played a very important part in their life, especially their judicial life. If a man was accused of any crime both he and the accuser met together in a large house. There, surrounded by their friends, they sang and danced to the accompaniment of a drum. Each tried in their songs to tell of the misdeeds of the other, and to hold him so up to ridicule that all the people would laugh. The man who turned the greatest number of laughs against his opponent, won the case. At times it has happened that ridicule has been so strong that the loser was driven into exile. The missionaries considered this a heathen custom and so caused it to be abolished.

**RELIGION.** The Eskimos are nature worshippers, as are so many of the other savage peoples. They conceive that every stone, mountain, glacier has its *inua* or soul. Even tools and weapons have *inuc* so that these things are placed upon the graves of the dead so that they may accompany the departed into the future life.

There are also beings of a higher order called *tôrnat* who can be brought near to man through the medium of the *angekoks* (medicine-men). They are the souls of the dead and act as counselors, helpers, or avengers to the medicine-man.

Above these *tôrnat* is a superior being who is thought to wield a benevolent power, although evil deeds are often attributed to him. His home is in the underworld with the souls of the dead. The conception of his form is different with different people. Some say that he has no form at all; others that he is like a bear; again that he is huge and has only one arm; and still others that he is no larger than a finger. When Christianity was introduced to the Eskimos this supreme being was transformed into the devil rather than into God.

Man himself is thought to consist of two parts, the body and the soul which are entirely distinct from each other. The soul can only be seen by the medicine-man to whom it appears in the same shape as the body, only of a more airy composition.

<sup>1</sup> Nansen, pp. 169-170.

It is very closely connected with the breath. According to some of the people, there is a soul in each part of the body which is thought to depart if that member is sick. The soul of man is quite independent and can leave the body at any time to wander at will. This it does every night when in dreams it goes hunting or joins in merry making. This soul can be lost or stolen by means of witchcraft. "Then the man falls ill, he must get his *angekok* to set off and fetch his soul back again. If, in the meantime any disaster has happened to it—the man must die. An *angekok*, however, had also power to provide a new soul or exchange a sick soul for a sound, which, he could obtain from, say, a hare, a reindeer, a bird, or a young child."<sup>1</sup>

**NAME.** Besides a man's body and soul there is a third element, the name, which plays an important part in his composition. "Among all Greenlanders, even the Christians, the first child born after the death of a member of the family is almost always called after him, the object being to procure peace for him in his grave. The East Greenlanders believe that the name remains with the body or migrates through different animals, until a child is called by it. It is, therefore, a duty to take care that this is done; if not, evil consequences may follow for the child to whom the name ought to have been given."<sup>2</sup>

The people are afraid of mentioning the name of the dead and if a living man bears the same name as that of the deceased he will change it. If the departed was named after some animal or abstract object the word designating it must be altered. This means, therefore, that the language is subject to important temporary changes.<sup>3</sup>

"The Greenlanders dare not even speak the name of a glacier as they row past it, for fear lest it should be offended and throw off an iceberg."<sup>4</sup>

**DEATH AND BURIAL.** "Their customs at the death and burial of their friends show how much they fear the dead, and especially their souls or ghosts. The dying are often dressed in their grave clothes—that is to say, in their best garments—a little while before death. The legs, too, are often bent together, so that the feet come up under the back, and in this position they are sewed or swathed in skins. The object is, no doubt, that they may take up less space and need a smaller grave; and it is done during their life in order that the survivors may have to handle their corpses as little as possible. This dread of touching a dead body goes so far that they will not help a man in danger—for example, a *kaiak*-man who is drowning—when they believe that he is at the point of death.

"When they are finally dead, they are taken, if it be in a house,

<sup>1</sup> Nansen, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> Nansen, pp. 228–229.

<sup>3</sup> "When Queen Pomare of Tahiti died, the word *po* (night) was dropped from the language, and *niri* took its place." Nansen, p. 231.

<sup>4</sup> Nansen, p. 233.



out through the window; if in a tent, through an opening cut in the skins of the back wall.

"The survivors also carry their own possessions out of the house, that the smell of death may pass away from them. They are either brought in again at evening, or, as on the east coast, are left lying out for several days. The relatives of the dead man, on the east coast, go so far as to leave off wearing their old clothes, which they throw away.

"When the body is carried out, a woman sets fire to a piece of wood, and waves it backwards and forwards, saying 'There is nothing more to be had here.' This is, no doubt, done with a view to showing the soul that everything belonging to it has been thrown out.

"Bodies are either buried in the earth or thrown into the sea (if one of the dead man's ancestors has perished in a *kaiak*). The possessions of the deceased—such as his *kaiak*, weapons, and clothes; or, in the case of a woman, her sewing materials, crooked knife, etc.—are laid on or beside the grave, or, if the body is thrown into the sea they are laid somewhere upon the beach. This seems to be partly due to their fear of a dead person's property and unwillingness to use it."<sup>1</sup>

**FUTURE LIFE.** The future life is largely a continuation of the life on this earth. There is a large mud hut with plenty of rotting seal heads under the benches to eat, and outside splendid hunting grounds with plenty of game and continual sunshine.

The other world is situated either under the earth and sea or between the land and sky. In the over-world region the souls dwell in tents around a lake which overflows causing rain on the earth. "The souls of the dead can be seen there by night, in the form of northern lights, playing football with a walrus head.

"The Eskimos have no hell. Both the above named regions are more or less good, and whether the soul goes to the one or to the other does not seem to depend particularly upon a man's good or evil acts."<sup>2</sup>

"The destination of the soul may partly depend on the treatment of the body. Paul Egede says that 'it was their custom to take people who were sick unto death gently out of bed, and, laying them on the floor, to swathe them in their grave-clothes. This lowering them down from the bed probably symbolizes their wish that after death they may descend beneath the earth. But if a man dies before he is taken from the bed, his soul goes upward.' On his inquiring why a dog's head was laid beside the grave, he was answered 'that it was a custom among some of their fellows to lay a dog's head beside a child when it was buried, in order that it might scent about and guide the child

<sup>1</sup> Nansen, pp. 245 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Nansen, pp. 235-236.

to the land of spirits when it came to life again, children being foolish and witless, and unable to find their own way.'"<sup>1</sup>

**GOVERNMENT.** The government of the Eskimos is truly of the patriarchal type for each father is the ruler of his own family. There are no chiefs or political military rulers but a good hunter is given certain consideration in his little village. There is no political or social tie between the villages although the people are friendly to each other, and under no consideration will they fight.

**THE ESKIMO OF TO-DAY.** The Eskimos to-day are a fast disappearing race due largely to the fact that the civilization of another race has been brought to them, and this they have been unable to assimilate. Firearms have been introduced to them, with the result that the game of all kinds is rapidly vanishing. Money has been given to them, and whereas they formerly gave away to their poorer neighbors those things of which they had an abundance and which were perishable they now sell them for gold to the traders.

"But worst of all is the irreparable injury which all our European commodities have done to him. We have been so immoral as to let him acquire a taste for coffee, tobacco, bread, European stuffs and finery; and he has bartered away to us his indispensable sealskins and blubber, to procure all these things which give him only a moment's doubtful enjoyment. In the meantime his woman-boat has gone to ruin for want of skins, his tent likewise, and even his kaiak, the essential condition of his existence, will often lie uncovered on the beach. The lamps in his house have often to be extinguished in the winter, because the autumn store of blubber has been sold to the Company. He himself must go on winter days clad in European rags instead of in the warm fur garments he used to have."

"Disease has of late years increased alarmingly. It is especially the Greenlanders scourge, consumption, or more properly tuberculosis, which makes ever wider ravages. There can be few places in the world where so large a proportion of the population is attacked by it. It is not quite clear whether we imported this disease into Greenland, but most probably we did; and at any rate, our influence has in more ways than one tended strongly to promote the spread of this and other contagious diseases. Tuberculosis is now so common that it is almost easier to number those who are not attacked by it than those who are."<sup>2</sup>

Lastly, their religion has been largely taken away from them and Christianity has been substituted.

"What part of Christianity is most to be valued, its dogmas or its moral teaching? It seems to me that even the best Christian must admit it is the latter which is of enduring value; for history can teach him how variable and uncertain the interpre-

<sup>1</sup> Nansen, pp. 235-236.

<sup>2</sup> Nansen, pp. 330-332.

tation of the dogmas has always been. Of what value, then, have these dogmas, which he understands so imperfectly, been to the Eskimo? Can anyone seriously maintain that it is a matter of essential moment to a people what dogmas it professes to believe in? Must not the moral laws which it obeys always be the matter of primary concern? And the Eskimo morality was, as we have seen, in many respects at least as good as that of the Christian communities. So that the result of all our teaching has been that, in this respect too, the race has degenerated.

And lastly comes this question: Can an Eskimo who is nominally a Christian, but who cannot support his family, is in ill-health, and is sinking into deeper and deeper misery, be held much more enviable than a heathen who lives in 'spiritual darkness,' but can support his family, is robust in body, and thoroughly contented with life? From the Eskimo standpoint at any rate, the answer cannot be doubtful. If he could see his true interest, the Eskimo would assuredly put up this fervent petition: God save me from my friends, my enemies I can deal with myself."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nansen, pp. 339-340.

## CHAPTER XV.

### INDONESIANS.

#### THE DYAKS AND OTHER NON-MALAY TRIBES OF BORNEO

**ENVIRONMENT.** "Borneo is one of the largest islands in the world. Its area is roughly 290,000 square miles, or about five times that of England and Wales. Its greatest length from northeast to southwest is 830 miles, and its greatest breadth is about 600 miles. It is crossed by the equator a little below its center, so that about two-thirds of its area lies in the northern and one-third lies in the southern hemisphere. Although surrounded on all sides by islands of volcanic origin, Borneo differs from them in presenting but few cases of volcanic activity."

The general character of the country is mountainous, but there are few peaks that rise above ten thousand feet. "In almost all parts of the island the land adjoining the coast is a low-lying, swampy belt consisting of alluvium brought down by the many rivers from the central highlands. This belt of alluvium extends inland in many parts for fifty miles or more, and is especially extensive in the south and southeast.

"Between the swampy coast belt and the mountains intervenes a zone of very irregular hill country, of which the average height above the sea level is about one thousand feet, with occasional peaks rising to five or six thousand feet or more.

"There seems good reason to believe that at a comparatively recent date Borneo was continuous with the main land of Asia, forming its southeastern extremity. Together with Sumatra and Java it stands upon a submarine bank, which is nowhere more than one hundred fathoms below the surface, but which plunges down to a very much greater depth along a line a little east of Borneo.

"The climate of the whole island is warm and moist and very equable. The rainfall is copious at all times of the year, but is rather heavier during the prevalence of the northeast monsoon in the months from October to February, and least during the months of April and May."<sup>1</sup>

**INHABITANTS.** "It is not improbable that at one time Borneo was inhabited by people of the negrito race, small remnants of which race are still to be found in islands adjacent to all the coasts of Borneo as well as in the Malay Peninsula. No communities of the race exist in the island at the present time; but among the people of the northern districts individuals may

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, "The Pagan Tribes of Borneo," pp. 1 ff.

occasionally be met with, whose hair and facial characters strongly suggest an infusion of negrito or negroid blood.

"It is probable that the mixed race of Hindu-Javanese invaders, who occupied the southern coasts of Borneo some centuries ago, became blended with the indigenous population, and that a considerable portion of their blood still runs in the veins of some of the tribes of the southern districts.

"Among the Mohammedans, who are found in all the coast regions of Borneo, there is a considerable number of persons who claim Arab forefathers; and there can be no doubt that the introduction of the Mohammedan religion was largely due to Arab traders, and that many Arabs and their half-bred descendants have held official positions under the Sultans of Bruni.

"With the exception of certain of the immigrants and their descendants, the population of Borneo may be described as falling into two great classes; namely, those who have accepted, nominally at least, the Mohammedan religion and civilization, and those who are pagans. All of these pagan tribes have often been classed indiscriminately under the name of Dyaks, though many groups may be clearly distinguished from one another by differences of culture, belief and custom, and peculiarities of their physical and mental constitutions.

"The Mohammedan population, being of very heterogeneous ethnic composition, and having adopted culture of foreign origin, which may be better studied in other regions of the earth, where the Malay type and culture are more truly indigenous, it seems to us to be of secondary interest to the anthropologist as compared with the less cultured tribes."<sup>1</sup>

"The name Indonesian is perhaps more properly applied to this people which we expect to have resulted from the contact and blending of the Caucasiac and Mongoloid stocks in this corner of Asia."<sup>2</sup>

The Polynesians likewise are a product of an ancient blend of southern Mongols with a fair Caucasiac stock. In both, the Caucasiac element predominates, but more so in the Polynesian than in the Indonesian. This blending was probably effected at a remote period in the southeastern corner of Asia probably before the date at which Borneo became separated from the mainland.

**PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS.** The Dyaks belong to the brown race. They average about 5', 3" in height. Most of them, during their early age, are very well but sparsely built, and the body seems to be in perfect proportion. The skull is dolichocephalic, the hair is long, curly and black, the cheek bones are high, the nose is flat but not so flat as the negro's and the bridge of the nose is depressed. The mouth is large and the lips are protruding. The faces of the women are rounder than those of the men, but both sexes have quite a Mongolian cast of countenance.

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. 1, pp. 28 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. 2, pp. 227 ff.

**CHARACTER.** The Dyaks may be ranked above the Malays in mental capacity, while in moral character they are undoubtedly superior to them. They are simple, honest and truthful to a remarkable degree and become the prey of the Malay and Chinese traders who cheat and plunder them continually. They are more lively, more talkative, less secretive and less superstitious than the Malays and are, therefore, pleasanter companions. Many travellers who have made a close study of these people claim that, so far as they know, none of their property has been stolen by the natives on the trips through the country. Even among themselves "dishonesty in the form of pilfering or open robbery by violence are of very rare occurrence. Yet temptations to both are not lacking. Fruit trees on the river bank, even at some distance from any village, are generally private property and though they offer great temptation to passing crews when their fruit is ripe, the rights of the proprietor are usually respected or compensation voluntarily paid. Theft within the house or village is practically unknown."<sup>1</sup>

These people are temperate in food and drink and the gross sensuality of the Chinese and Malay is unknown among them. One of the worst features in connection with the Dyak character is that of temper. The people are sulky, obstinate and sullen when put out or corrected and they are exceedingly apathetic, nor does there appear any inclination on their part to rise above their low and degraded condition.

"The Dyaks are not coarse of speech and both men and women are strictly modest in regard to the display of the body. Though the costume of both sexes is so scanty the proprieties are observed. The bearing of the women is habitually modest and though their single garment might be supposed to afford insufficient protection, they wear it with a habitual skill that compensates for the scantiness of its dimensions."<sup>2</sup>

"On the whole few if any gross vices are practiced among them and if committed they are single acts perpetrated by individuals and not by the mass of the people. It must be confessed that their morals, both before and after marriage, are somewhat loose, though seldom depraved. They are cheerful, patient, gentle and often remarkably forbearing of injury and above all exceedingly kind to their aged and infirm relatives and especially loving to their children, though out of the pale of the family there is little charity shown."<sup>3</sup>

### **SELF-MAINTENANCE.**

**AGRICULTURE.** Most of the people in the interior of Borneo grow rice or padi which is the principal foodstuff. "Throughout the year, except during the few weeks when the jungle fruit is

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. 2, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. 2, p. 202.

<sup>3</sup> H. L. Roth, "Natives of Sarawak and British North Borneo," pp. 65 ff.

most abundant, rice forms the bulk of every meal. In years of bad harvest, when the supply is deficient, the place of rice has to be filled as well as may be with wild sago, cultivated maize, tapioca and sweet potatoes.

"The cultivator has to contend with many difficulties, for in the moist, hot climate weeds grow apace and the fields being closely surrounded by virgin forests are liable to attacks of pests of many kinds. Hence the processes by which the annual crop of padi is obtained demand the best efforts and care of all the people of each village.

"The preparation of the land is everywhere very crude, consisting in the felling of the timber and undergrowth and in burning as completely as possible so that those ashes enrich the soil. After a single crop has been grown and gathered on the land so cleared the weeds grow up very quickly and there is, of course, in the following year no possibility of repeating the dressing of wood ashes in the same way. Hence it is the universal practice to allow the land to lie fallow for at least two years after a single crop has been raised, while crops are raised from other lands. During the fallow period the jungle grows up so rapidly and thickly that by the third year the weeds have almost died out, choked by the larger growth. The same land is then prepared again by felling the young jungle and burning it as before and a crop is again raised from it.

"Each family cultivates its own patch of land, selecting it by arrangement with other families, and works as large an area as the strength and number in the roomhold permits. A hillside that slopes down to the bank of a river or navigable stream is considered the choicest area for cultivation, partly because the felling is easier on the slope and because the stream affords easy access to the field.

"When an area has been chosen, the men of the roomhold first cut down the undergrowth of a V-shaped area, whose apex points up the hill, and whose base lies on the river bank. This done, they call in the help of other men of the house, usually relatives who are engaged in preparing adjacent areas, and all set to work to fell the large trees. In the clearing of virgin forest, when very large trees, many of which have at their bases immense buttresses, have to be felled, a platform of light poles is built around each of these giants to the height of about 15 feet. Two men standing upon this rude platform on opposite sides of the stem attack it with their small springy-hafted axes above the level of the buttresses. One man cuts a deep notch on the side facing up the hill, the other cuts a similar notch about a foot lower down on the opposite side, each cutting almost to the centre of the stem. This operation is accomplished in a surprisingly short time, perhaps thirty minutes in the case of a stem two to three feet in diameter. When all the large trees within the V-shaped area have been cut in this way, all the workers and any women, children or dogs who

may be present are called out of the patch, and one or two big trees, carefully selected to form the apex of the phalanx, are then cut so as to fall down the hill. In their fall these giants throw down the trees standing immediately below them on the hillside; these falling in turn against their neighbours, bring them down. And so, like an avalanche of widening sweep, the huge disturbance propagates itself with a thunderous roar and increasing momentum downwards over the whole of the prepared area; while puny man looks on at the awful work of his hand and brain not unmoved, but dancing and shouting in wild triumphant delight.

"The fallen timber must now lie some weeks before it can be burned. This period is mainly devoted to making and repairing implements to be used in cultivating, harvesting and storing the crops and also in sowing, at the earliest possible moment, small patches of early or rapidly growing padi together with a little maize, sugar cane, some sweet potatoes and tapioca."<sup>1</sup>

After the padi is sown the men build in each patch a small hut which is occupied by most of the able-bodied members of the roomhold until the harvest is completed. "They erect contrivances for scaring away the birds; they stick bamboos about eight feet in length upright in the ground every 20 to 30 yards. Between the upper ends of these, rattans are tied, connecting together all the bamboos on each area of about one acre. The field of one roomhold is generally about four acres in extent; there will thus be four groups of bamboos, each of which can be agitated by pulling on a single rattan. From each such group a rattan passes to the hut, and some person, generally a woman or child, is told off to tug at these rattans in turn at short intervals. Upon the rattans between the bamboos are hung various articles calculated to make a noise or to flap to and fro when the system is set in motion. Sometimes the rattan by which the system of poles is set in movement is tied to the upper end of a tall sapling one end of which is thrust deeply into the mud of the floor of the river. The current then keeps the sapling and with it the system of bamboos swaying and jerking to and fro.

"It is the duty of the women to prevent the padi being choked by weeds. The women of each roomhold go over each patch completely at least twice at intervals of about one month hoeing down the weeds with a short handle hoe. The hoe consists of a flat blade projecting at right angles from the iron haft."<sup>2</sup>

After the padi is brought in from the fields the women pound it and winnow it and finally put it into form to be consumed. While the women are doing this the men are out hunting for the wild pig, the monkey or the porcupine, or are out on a fishing expedition.

**FISHING.** "The fish are caught in the rivers in several ways, and form an important part of the diet of most of the peoples.

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. 1, pp. 97 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. 1, p. 103.



Perhaps the cast net is most commonly used. This net is used both in deep and shallow water. In the former case one man steers and paddles the boat while the other stands at the prow with the cord of the net wound about the right hand.

"The bulk of the net is gathered up on his right arm, the free end is held in the left hand. Choosing a still pool some two fathoms in depth, he throws a stone into the water a little ahead of the boat, in the expectation that the fish will congregate about the spot as they do when fruit falls from the trees on the banks. Then, as the boat approaches the spot he deftly flings the net so that it falls spread out upon the surface; its weighted edge then sinks rapidly to the bottom, enclosing any fish that may be beneath the net. If only small fish are enclosed, the net is twisted as it is drawn up, the fish becoming entangled in its meshes, and in pockets formed about its lower border. If a large fish is enclosed, the steersman will dive overboard and seize the lower part of the net so as to secure the fish.

**JUNGLE PRODUCTS.** "The principal natural products gathered by the people in addition to the edible fruits are: gutta-percha, rubber and camphor. Small parties of men and boys go out into the jungle in search of these things, sometimes traveling many days up river before striking into the jungle; for it is only in the drier upland forests that such expeditions can be undertaken with advantage. The party may remain several weeks or months from home. They carry with them a supply of rice, salt and tobacco, cooking-pots and matches, a change of raiment, spears, swords, shields, blowpipes and perhaps two or three dogs. On striking into the jungle, they drag their boat on to the bank and leave it hidden in the thick undergrowth. While in the jungle they camp in rude shelters roofed with their leaf mats and with palm leaves, moving camp from time to time. They vary their labours and supplement their food-supply by hunting and trapping. Such an expedition is generally regarded as highly enjoyable as well as profitable."<sup>1</sup>

"Valuable varieties of gutta-percha are obtained from trees of more than a score of species. The trees are felled and the stem and branches are ringed at intervals of about 18", a narrow strip of bark being removed at each ring. The milky, viscid sap drips out into leaf-cups, which are then emptied into a cylindrical vessel of bark. Water is then boiled in a large pan beside the tree. A little common salt is added to the water and the gutta is poured into the boiling water when it rapidly congeals. Then while it is in a semi-viscid state it is kneaded with the feet and pressed into a shallow wooden frame which is in turn compressed between two planks."<sup>2</sup>

It is then cut up into slabs about a foot long and one and one-half inches thick and sent on to the market at Singapore, where it sells for about \$500 the hundred-weight.

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. 1, pp. 149-150.

<sup>2</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. 1, p. 151.

Camphor is also collected in great quantities by certain peoples in Borneo. This product is formed in the crevices of old trees. The tree is cut down, the stem split up and the crystalline scales of pure camphor are shaken out onto mats. It is then made up in little bundles and wrapped in palm leaves. The large flaked camphor brings as much as \$30 a pound in the Chinese Bazaar.

Before a party starts out to collect the camphor omens are taken to find out whether the expedition will be a success or not. If they find that the omens are unfavorable, they will postpone the trip until some future time.

**IRON.** One of the great handicrafts of these people is the working of iron. At the present day they obtain most of their iron in the form of bars imported from Europe and distributed by the Chinese and Malay traders. But thirty years ago nearly all the iron ore came from the beds of the rivers and possibly from masses of meteoric iron.

Smelting of the ore is performed by mixing or using charcoal in a clay crucible which is embedded in a pile of charcoal. The charcoal being ignited is blown to a white heat by the aid of bellows. The bellows consist of wooden cylinders made from the stem of the wild Sago palm. At the bottom of the cylinder is placed a small hollow tube. A piston is worked by a man standing on a platform raised three or four feet above the ground. "The piston consists of a stout stick bearing at its lower end a bunch of feathers large enough to fill the bore of the cylinder. When the piston is thrust downwards it drives the air before it to the furnace; as it is drawn upwards the feathers collapse allowing the entrance of air from above."<sup>1</sup>

**BOATS.** Boats are used by nearly all the peoples of Borneo as the sole means of transportation. These boats are made from logs hollowed out and are sometimes as long as 150 feet. The trees for these boats are felled in the forest, dragged to the river and floated down to the village during flood time. They are moored to the shore so that when the flood recedes they are left on dry land. A hut is built over them so that the men are protected from the heat of the sun. The boats are hollowed out by means of axes, and through the use of fire and water. "The whole operation, like every other important undertaking, is preceded by the finding of omens and it is liable to be postponed by the observation of ill omens, by bad dreams or by any misfortunes such as death in the house."<sup>2</sup>

**HOUSES.** "The houses in which the Borneo people live are the outcome of a life of constant apprehension of attack from head-hunters. In union alone is strength. Surrounded by a dense jungle which affords, night and day, up to the very steps to their homes, a protecting cover for enemies, the Borneans live, as it were, in fighting trim, with their backs to a hollow square. A

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. 1, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. I, p. 202.

village of scattered houses would mean the utmost danger to those on the outskirts; consequently, houses which would ordinarily form a village have been crowded together until one roof covers them all. The rivers and streams are the only thoroughfares in the island, and village houses are always built close to the river-banks, so that boats can be quickly reached; this entails another necessity in the construction of the houses. The torrents during the rainy season, which, on the western half of the island, last from October till February, swell the rivers with such suddenness and to such an extent that in a single night the water will overflow banks thirty feet high, and convert the jungle round about into a soggy swamp; unless the houses were built of stone they would be inevitably swept away by the rush of water; wherefore the natives build on high piles and live above the moisture and decay of the steaming ground.

"Beneath the houses is the storage-place for canoes that are leaky and old, or only half finished and in process of being sprung and spread out into proper shape before being fitted up with gunwales and thwarts. It is generally a very disorderly and noisome place, where all the refuse from the house is thrown, and where pigs wallow, and chickens scratch for grains of rice that fall from the husking mortars in the veranda overhead. Between the houses and the river's bank—a distance of a hundred yards, more or less—the jungle is cleared away, and in its place are clumps of cocoanut, or Areca palms, and, here and there, small storehouses, built on piles, for rice. In front of the houses of the Kayans there are sure to be one or two forges, where the village blacksmiths, makers of spear-heads, swords, hoes and axes, hold an honorable position. In the shade of the palms, the boat-builders' sheds protect from the scorching heat of the sun the great logs that are being scooped out to form canoes; the ground is covered with chips, from which arises a sour, sappy odor that is almost pungent and is suggestive of all varieties of fever, but is really quite harmless. In the open spaces tall, reedy grass grows, and after hard rains, a misstep, from the logs forming a pathway, means to sink into black, oozy mud up to the knees.

"Just on the bank of the river there are usually four or five posts, about eight feet high, roughly carved at the top to represent a man's head; these have been put up after successful head-hunting raids, and on them are tied various fragments of the enemy—a rib, or an arm, or a leg bone; these offerings drive away the evil Spirits who might wish to harass the inmates of the house, and they also serve as a warning to enemies who may be planning an attack. Such remnants of the enemy are held by no means in the same veneration with which the heads, hung up in the house, are regarded; after the bits of flesh and bone are tied to the posts they are left to the wind and rain, the pigs and chickens.

"Some years ago it was the custom before building a house to thrust into the first excavation, wherein the heavy corner post

was to rest, a young slave girl alive, and the mighty post was then planted on her body, crushing out her life, as a propitiatory offering to the demons that they should not molest the dwelling. This custom has now been abolished and instead of a girl, a pig or a fowl has been substituted.

"The veranda, or main street, of these houses is where all public life goes on; here, in the smoky atmosphere that pervades the place, councils of war and peace are held, feasts spread, and large part of the daily work performed. It is seldom a very bright or cheery place; the eaves come down so low that the sunlight penetrates only at sunrise and sunset, and the sooty smoke from the fires turns all the woodwork to a sombre, mahogany hue. The floor is usually of broad, hewn planks, loosely laid upon the joists, with little care whether they fit close or warp and bend up out of shape, leaving wide cracks through which a small child might fall; they show plainly the cuts of the adze, but they soon become polished by the leathery soles of bare feet shuffling over them from dawn till dark. At intervals of perhaps fifty feet are fireplaces—merely shallow boxes about five feet square by six inches deep, filled with flat stones imbedded in clay; herein are built the fires that give light at night and add to sociability at all times; no council or friendly talk is complete without the crackle of a fire to enliven it and to keep away evil Spirits. Of course, no chimney carries off the smoke, which must disperse as best it can among the cobwebby beams overhead, after giving a fresh coat of soot to the row or bunch of trophy-skulls that hangs in the place of honor opposite to the door of the chief's room. The odor of burning resinous wood, mingled with other ingredients, saturates the veranda, and in after-life the smell of musty garret, cedar-wood chests and brush-wood burning in the autumn instantly recalls the veranda of a Borneo long-house. It must be confessed that occasionally there mingles with this aromatic odor a tang of wet dog, wallowing pig and ancient fish, but then, after all, these are not peculiar to Borneo."<sup>1</sup>

Leading from this porch are the rooms belonging to the individual families. It frequently happens that as many as five hundred people occupy one of these houses and so the number of rooms is often as large as a hundred. These rooms are about twenty-five feet square. In them, along the sides, is a raised platform upon which are erected sleeping closets for the parents or for the grown daughters. Towards the front part of the room is a fireplace made of clay and large flat stones, upon which most of the cooking is done. "The sleeping closets partitioned off for married couples or for unmarried girls and widows to sleep in, are as dark and stuffy as close-fitting planks can make them, and the bed is merely two or three broad and smooth planks whereon a fine rattan matting is spread."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Furness, "Home Life of the Borneo Head Hunters," pp. 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> Furness, p. 10.

**MEALS.** "On all ordinary occasions, the family eat together, usually only twice a day, morning and evening, in the family room. In the centre of the room is placed a large wooden dish piled high with boiled rice and then, as a plate for each member of the family, is set a piece of fresh banana leaf, whereon are a little salt and a small quantity of powdered dried fish, highly odorous; this is the usual bill of fare, but it may be supplemented with a sort of mush or stew of fern-front sprouts and rice, or with boiled Caladium roots and roasted wild yams. When there is a feast and guests from neighboring houses come to dine, the meals are spread in the veranda and the menu is enlarged with pork and chicken, cooked in joints of bamboo, which have been stoppered at both ends with green leaves, and put in the fire until they are burnt through, when the cooking is done to a turn.

"All hands are plunged into the common dish of plain boiled rice, and it is 'excellent form' to cram and jam the mouth as full as it will hold. It is, however, remarkable how deftly even little children can so manipulate the boiled rice before conveying it to their mouths, that hardly a grain is spilt; it always filled me with shame when dining en famille with the Kayans or Kenyahs to note what a mess of scattered rice I left on the mat at my place, while their places were clean as when they sat down; to be sure, I did not follow my hosts' example in carefully gathering up and devouring all that had fallen on the unswept floor. Whenever I apologized for my clumsiness, their courtesy was always perfect; the fault was never attributed to me, but rather to their poor food and the manner in which it was served.

"The long intervals between their meals and the unsubstantial quality of their food give them such an appetite and force them to eat so voraciously that the usual welcome by a Kayan host to his guests is, 'Eat slowly,' and this admonition is unfailingly given. They seem to regard their family meals as strictly private, and would always announce to us that they were going to eat—possibly to give us warning not to visit them at that time, and they were also quite as punctilious to leave us the moment that our food was served."<sup>1</sup>

**MARRIAGE.** "Very few men have more than one wife. Occasionally a chief whose wife has borne him no children during some years of married life or has found the labors of entertaining his guests beyond her strength will with her consent or even at her request take a second younger wife. In such a case each wife has her own sleeping apartment within the chief's larger chamber and the younger wife is expected to defer to the older one and to help her in the work of the house and the field. The second wife would be chosen from a rather lower social standing than the first wife, who in virtue of this fact maintains her ascendancy more easily."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Furness, pp. 11-12.

<sup>2</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. I, p. 73.

When a youth desires to marry, he begins by paying attentions to the girl who attracts his fancy. He will frequently be found passing the evening in her company in her parents' room. There he will display his skill with the Jew's harp or sing the favorite love song of the people varying the words to suit the occasion. If the girl looks with favor on his attentions she manages to make the fact known to him by presenting him with a cigarette tied with a banana leaf in a certain manner. "If his suit makes progress, he may hope that the fair one will draw out with a pair of brass tweezers the hairs of his eyebrows and lashes, while he reclines on his back with his head in her lap. If these hairs are very few, the girl will remark that some one else has been pulling them out, an imputation which he repudiates. Or he complains of a headache, and she administers scalp massage by winding tufts of hair about her knuckles and sharply tugging them. When the courtship has advanced to this stage, the girl may attract her suitor to the room by playing on the Jew's harp, with which she claims to be able to speak to him—presumably the language of the heart.

"The youth, thus encouraged, may presume to remain beside his sweetheart till early morning, or to return to her side when the old people have retired. When the affair has reached this stage, it becomes necessary to secure the public recognition which constitutes the relation a formal betrothal. The man charges some elderly friend of either sex, in many cases his father or mother, to inform the chief of his desire. The latter expresses a surprise which is not always genuine; and, if the match is a suitable one, he contents himself with giving a little friendly advice. But if he is aware of any objections to the match he will point them out, and though he will seldom forbid it in direct terms, he will know how to cause the marriage to be postponed.

"If the chief and parents favour the match, the young man presents a brass gong or a valuable bead to the girl's family as a pledge of his sincerity. This is returned to him if for any reason beyond his control the match is broken off. The marriage may take place with very little delay; but during the interval between betrothal and marriage the omens are anxiously observed and consulted. All accidents affecting any members of the village are regarded as of evil omen, the more so the more nearly the betrothed parties are concerned in them. The cries of birds and deer are important; those heard about the house are likely to be bad omens, and it is sought to compensate for those by sending a man skilled in augury to seek good omens in the jungle, such as the whistle of the Trogan and of the spider-hunter, and the flight of the hawk from right to left high up in the sky. If the omens are persistently and predominantly bad, the marriage is put off for a year, and after the next harvest fresh omens are sought. The man is encouraged in the meantime to absent himself from the village, in the hope that he may form some other attachment. But if he remains true:

and favourable omens are obtained, the marriage is celebrated if possible at the close of the harvest. If the marriage takes place at any other time, the feast will be postponed to the end of the following harvest. After the marriage the man lives with his wife in the room of his father-in-law for one, two, or at most three years. During this time he works in the fields of the household, showing great deference towards his wife's parents. Before the end of the third year of marriage, the young couple will acquire for themselves a room in the house and village of the husband, in which they set up housekeeping on their own account. In addition to these personal services rendered to the parents of the bride, the man or his father and other relatives give to the girl's parents at the time of the marriage various articles which are valuable in proportion to the social standing of the parties, and which are generally appropriated by the girl's parents."<sup>1</sup>

**ADOPTION.** "Adoption is by no means uncommon. The desire for children, especially male children is general and strong, but sterile marriages seem to be known among all the peoples. When a woman has remained unfertile for some years after her marriage the couple usually seek to adopt one or more children. They generally prefer children of a relative but may take any child even a captive or slave child, whose parents are willing to resign all rights in it."<sup>2</sup>

Some of the peoples have a curious symbolic ceremony on adoption of a child. Both man and wife observe for some weeks before the ceremony all of the prohibitions usually observed during the latter months of pregnancy. At the time of the ceremony the woman goes through the motions or movements of giving birth to a child and thus the adopted child becomes an actual member of the family.

**SELF-GRATIFICATION.** One of the great pleasures of the peoples of Borneo is dancing. At every feast at the conclusion of peace, during every ceremony, large numbers of dances accompanied by singing and playing on the crudest musical instruments are indulged in. Few of these dances however, are more than crude unmeaning steps around the camp fire. "One warrior is engaged in picking a thorn out of his foot, but is ever on the alert for the lurking enemy with his arms ready at hand. This enemy is at length suddenly discovered, and after some rapid attack and defence, a sudden plunge is made at him and he is dead upon the ground. The taking of his head follows in pantomime. The last agonies of the dying man were too painful and probably too truthfully depicted to be altogether a pleasant sight. The story then concludes with the startling discovery that the slain man is not an enemy at all but the brother of the warrior who has slain him. At this point the dance gives way to what was perhaps the least pleasing part of the performance—a man in a fit, writhing in

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. I, pp. 74-76.

<sup>2</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. I, p. 77.

frightful convulsions, being charmed into life and sanity by a necromantic physician.”<sup>1</sup>

**TATTOOING.** Nearly all of the peoples of the island of Borneo tattoo the skin. In many cases the designs are most elaborate and the work occupies weeks and even months. As a rule the design is first carved on wood and then smeared with a sooty preparation and printed on the skin. The figure is then punctured in outline with needles dipped in ink and afterwards filled up in detail. More ink is poured on the skin and allowed to dry. Rice is smeared over the inflamed surface in order to keep it cool; for if this is not done it is apt to gather and fester. As a rule the hands, feet and legs are tattooed although in some cases every portion of the body is decorated. A woman is tattooed on the upper part of the hands and over the whole of each forearm, on both thighs to below the knee and on the upper part of the feet and toes. All women are expected to be tattooed before they are allowed to marry, but as a rule a man is not tattooed until he has taken a head.

“Of course, the complete pattern on women is never finished at one sitting; it would involve more suffering than can be borne without, perhaps, serious shock; but the martyrdom is often endured for a couple of hours, and then, to fill in chance gaps and weak places, that which has been already pricked in, and is become an exquisitely tender welt, is mercilessly jabbed and hammered over again, not only once but even twice. The instant that the poor wretch of a girl is released from the hands, and toes, of her tormentor, she runs with the swiftness of agony to the river, there to soothe with the cool flowing water the frightful, burning ache. The absorption of so much foreign matter by the lymphatics often induces high fever; suppuration also not infrequently results from the septic manner in which the operation is performed; this naturally injures the sharpness of the lines. After one session, the tattooing is not resumed until the skin is entirely healed unless an approaching marriage necessitates the utmost speed; should a woman have a child before her tattooing is completed, she is lastingly disgraced. The Kenyah women are tattooed only on the forearms and hands and on the dorsum of the foot, not on the legs or thighs.”<sup>2</sup>

**PUNCTURED EARS.** Another means of increasing the personal beauty is to puncture the ears by putting heavy weights in them so that eventually the lobes hang down onto the shoulders. This is begun when a child is two or three years old, by puncturing the ears and placing therein several pewter rings. These are gradually increased in number until their weight amounts to five or six ounces and by the end of the first year the lobe has been lengthened three or four inches. The weights are increased until

<sup>1</sup> H. Ling Roth, “Natives of Sarawak, and British North Borneo,” Vol. I, p. 250.

<sup>2</sup> Furness, p. 153.



the lobes are seven or eight inches long and supporting three pounds of copper rings. It frequently happens that the loop of skin thus formed is sufficiently large and elastic to be slipped over the head.

"The men of these same tribes, although they escape from extreme length of ears, must endure a second mutilation of this appendage. But this time it is in the upper part that a hole is punched, wherein, when they attain to full manhood and have been on a war expedition, there is inserted a tiger-cat's canine tooth decorated at the large end with a tuft of bead-work, or a silver cap, to keep it in place. Before they are entitled to this adornment, the hole, at least half an inch in diameter, is kept open by a simple wooden plug, which is generally worn, even by warriors, except on ceremonial occasions, and especially when in mourning for the dead."<sup>1</sup>

**TEETH DECORATION.** Some of the people blacken the teeth, for white teeth are considered a frightful disfigurement and he or she who for a few days forgets to renew the stain is sure to be jeered at by all companions with the scoffing remark that "white teeth are no better than a dog's." "Some of the people not content with blackening the teeth actually drill holes through and through the faces of the six front teeth, and therein insert plugs of brass, whereof the outer end is elaborated into stars and crescents. Then they finish up by filing the teeth to sharp points! No dentist's chair can hold a more hideous torture than this. The drill—usually no more delicate an instrument than the rounded end of a file—bores directly through the sensitive pulp of the tooth, tearing and twisting a nerve so exquisitely sensitive that but to touch it starts the perspiration and seems the limit of human endurance; yet an Iban will lie serene and unquivering on the floor while his beauty is thus enhanced by some kind and tender-hearted friend. Of course, the tooth dies and becomes a mere shell, tanned inside and out by repeated applications of the astringent blackening; the gums recede, exposing the fangs of the teeth and sometimes portions of the alveolar process—I need not add that the mouth of a middle-aged Iban is anything but attractive."<sup>2</sup>

**RELIGION.** The spiritual powers or spirits may be regarded as of three principal classes:

"(1). There are the anthropomorphic spirits, thought of as dwelling in remote and vaguely conceived regions and as very powerful to intervene in human life. Towards these the attitude of the Kayans is one of supplication and awe, gratitude and hope, an attitude which is properly called reverential and is the specifically religious attitude. These spirits must be admitted to be gods in a very full sense of the word, and the practices, doctrines, and emotions centered about these spirits must be regarded as constituting a system of religion.

(2). A second consists of the spirits of living and deceased

<sup>1</sup> Furness, p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> Furness, pp. 157-158.

persons, and of other anthropomorphically conceived spirits which, as regards the nature and extent of their powers, are more nearly on a level with the human spirits than those of the first class. Such are those embodied in the omen animals and in the domestic pig, fowl, dog, in the crocodile, and possibly in the tiger-cat and a few other animals.

(3). The third class is more heterogeneous, and comprises all the spirits or impalpable intelligent powers that do not fall into one or other of the two preceding classes; such are the spirits very vaguely conceived as always at hand, some malevolent, some good; such also are the spirits which somehow are attached to the heads hung up in the houses. The dominant emotion in the presence of these is fear; and the attitude is that of avoidance and propitiation.”<sup>1</sup>

There are a large number of gods who guard the lives and interests of these people. The most important of these are the God of War, three Gods of Life, God of Thunder and Storms, God of Fire, Gods of the Harvest, God of the Lakes and Rivers, God of Madness, God of Fear and the God who conducts the souls of the dead to Hades. “The people seem to have no very clear and generally accepted dogmas about these gods. Some assert they dwell in the skies, but others regard them as dwelling below the surface of the earth. The former opinion is in harmony with the practice of erecting a tree before the house with its branches buried in the ground and the root upturned when prayers are made on behalf of the whole house; for the tree seems to be regarded as in some sense forming a ladder or path of communication with the superior powers. The same opinion seems to be expressed in the importance attached to fire and smoke in prayer and ritual.”<sup>2</sup>

“While some gods, those of war and life, of harvest and of fire, are distinctly friendly, others, namely, the gods of madness and fear, are terrible and malevolent; while the god of thunder and those that conduct the souls to Hades do not seem to be predominantly beneficent or malevolent.”<sup>3</sup>

The spirits of the third type are known as Toh. All the spirits of this class seem to be objects of fear, to be malevolent or at least easily offended and capable of bringing misfortunes of all kinds upon human beings.

“The Toh play a considerable part in regulating conduct; for they are the powers that bring misfortunes upon a whole house or village when any member of it ignores tabus or otherwise breaks customs, without performing the propitiatory rites demanded by the occasion. Thus on them, rather than on the gods, are founded the effective sanctions of prohibitive rules of conduct. For the propitiation of offended Toh, fowls’ eggs and the blood of fowls and of young pigs are used, the explanations and apologies being

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. II, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. II, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. II, p. 6.

offered generally by the chief or some other influential person, while the blood is sprinkled on the culprit or other source of offence."<sup>1</sup>

**SICKNESS.** The Kayans have various ways of treating disease. "Thus bodily injuries received accidentally or in battle are treated surgically, by keeping splints, bandaging, etc. Familiar disorders such as malarial fever are treated medically, that is by rest and drugs. Cases of severe pain of unknown origin are generally attributed to the malign influence of some Toh and the method is usually that of extraction. Madness is also generally attributed to possession by some Toh, but in cases of severe illness of mysterious origin that seems to threaten to end mortally the theory generally adopted is that the patient's soul has left his body and the treatment indicated is therefore an attempt to persuade the soul to return. The first two modes of treatment are not considered to demand the skill of a specialist for their application, but the third and fourth are undertaken only by those who have special powers and knowledge.

"Among the Kayans the professional soul-catcher, the Dayong, is generally a woman who has served a considerable period of apprenticeship with some older member of the profession, after having been admonished to take up this calling by some being met with in dreams, often a dream experienced during sickness. If the Dayong decides that the soul of the patient has left his body and has gone some part of the journey towards the abode of departed souls, his task is to fall into a trance and to send his soul to overtake that of his patient and to persuade it to return.

"The Dayong may or may not fall and lie inert upon the ground in the course of his trance; but throughout the greater part of the ceremony he continues to chant with closed eyes describing with words and mimic gestures the doings of his own soul as it follows after and eventually overtakes that of the patient."<sup>1</sup>

When all the various efforts are apparently unavailing the despairing relatives will put the end of a blow-pipe to the dying or dead man's ear and shout through it: "Come back, this is your home, here we have food ready for you." Sometimes the departing soul is believed to reply: "I am far from home, I am following a Toh and don't know the way back."

"If, in spite of all these efforts, the patient dies, a drum is loudly beaten in order to announce the decease to relatives and friends gone before, the number of strokes depending upon the rank and sex of the departing spirit. The corpse is kept in the house during a period which varies from one night for people of the lower class, to three nights for middle class folk, and ten days for a chief. During this time the dead man lies in state. The corpse has a bead of some value under each eyelid; it is dressed in his finest clothes and ornaments, and is enclosed within a coffin

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. II, pp. 28 ff.

hollowed from a single log, the lid of which is sealed with resin and lashed round with rattans." <sup>1</sup>

The body is then taken to the burying-ground near the camp and placed in the coffin on top of a high pole. If the man is a big chief the pole is decorated, formerly by means of shells but now days European crockery is used and a German firm supplies dinner plates provided with two perforations which facilitate the attachments of a plate. In some portions of the country the body is taken out and burned.

**HEAD-HUNTING.** The reasons for head-hunting are various. Some say that heads are taken in order that the spirits of the people will become slaves in the next world. Others say that they take heads in order that those who were once their enemies thereby become their guardians, and their friends become their benefactors. The heads, after they are taken, are dried and smoked in a small hut made for the purpose and are then brought up to the house amid loud rejoicings and singing of the war choruses. "For this ceremony all members of the village are summoned from the fields and jungle and when all are assembled in the houses everyone puts off the mourning garments which have been worn by all since the death of the chief for whose funeral rites the heads have been sought. Then the procession carries the heads into the house and up and down the gallery. The men dressed in their war coats, carrying shields and swords, drawn up in a long line, sing the war chorus, and go through a peculiar evolution, known as 'Segar lupar.' Each man keeps turning to face his neighbours, first on one side, then on the other, with regular steps in time with all the rest. This seems to symbolize the alertness of the warriors on the war-path, looking in every direction. The heads, which have been carried by old men, are then hung up over the principal hearth on the beam on which the old heads are hanging; they are suspended by means of a rattan, of which one end is knotted and the other passed upward through the foramen magnum and a hole cut in the top of the skull. After this the men sit down to drink and the chief describes the taking of the heads, eulogizing the warrior who drew first blood in each case, and who is credited with the glory of the taking of the head. Then follows a big feast, in every room a pig or fowl being killed and eaten; after which more borak is drunk, the war chorus breaking out spontaneously at brief intervals. Borak is offered to the heads by pouring it into small bamboo cups suspended beside them; and a bit of fat pork will be pushed into the mouth of each. The heads, or rather the Toh associated with them, are supposed to drink and eat these offerings. The fact that the bits of pork remain unconsumed does not seem to raise any difficulty in the minds of the Kayans; they seem to believe that the essence of the food is consumed.

"The fire beneath the heads is always kept alight in order that they shall be warm, and dry, and comfortable. On certain

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. II, pp. 32 ff.

special occasions they are offered borak and pork in the way mentioned above.

"On moving to a new house the heads are temporarily lodged in a small shelter built for the purpose, and are brought up into the house with a ceremony like that which celebrates their first installation. The Kayans do not care to have in the house more than twenty or thirty heads and are at some pains occasionally to get rid of some superfluous heads—a fact which shows clearly that the heads are not mere trophies of valour and success in war. The moving to a new house is the occasion chosen for reducing the number of heads. Those destined to be left are hung in a hut built at some distance from the house which is about to be deserted. A good fire is made in it and kept up during the demolition of the great house, and when the people depart they make up in the little head-house a fire designed to last several days. It is supposed that, when the fire goes out, the Toh of the heads notice the fact, and begin to suspect that they are deserted by the people; when the rain begins to come in through the roof their suspicions are confirmed, and the Toh set out to pursue their deserters, but owing to the lapse of time and weather are unable to track them. The people believe that in this way they escape the madness which the anger of the deserted Toh would bring upon them."<sup>1</sup>

After the heads have been taken the people scoop out the brains through the nostrils. They tear off a bit of the cheek skin and eat it as a charm to make them fearless. They cut off the hair to ornament their sword-hilts; if the jaws drop they fasten them up and if the teeth fall out or if they extract them they fill up the cavity with imitation ones of wood. They generally plug the nostrils with wooden stoppers, the tongue is cut out, the eyes are punctured with a sword so as to allow the fluid contents to escape.

The heads of the enemies of the Hill Dyaks are not preserved with the flesh and hair adhering to them; the skull only is retained, the lower jaw being taken away and a piece of wood being substituted for it.

**GOVERNMENT.** "Each village is absolutely independent of all others save so far as custom and caution prescribe that before undertaking any important affair (such as removal of the village or warlike expedition) the chief will ask the advice and if necessary the co-operation of the chiefs of the neighboring villages. The people of the neighboring villages, especially the families of the chiefs are bound together by many ties of kinship; for inter-marriage is frequent.

"The minor and purely domestic affairs of each house are settled by the house chief, but all important matters of general interest are brought before the village chief.

"The degree of authority of the chiefs and the nature and the degree of penalties imposed by them are prescribed in a gen-

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. II, pp. 21-22.

eral way by custom, although as regards the former much depends upon the personal qualities of each chief and as regards the latter, much is left to his discretion.

"The chief also is responsible for the proper observation of the omens and for the regulation of malan (tabu) affecting the whole house; and, he takes the leading part in social ceremonies and in most of the religious rites collectively performed by the village. He is regarded by other chiefs as responsible for the behaviour of his people, and above all, in war he is responsible for both strategy and tactics and the general conduct of operations.

"For the maintenance of his authority and the enforcement of his commands the chief relies upon the force of public opinion, which, so long as he is capable and just, will always support him, and will bring severe moral pressure to bear upon any member of the household who hesitates to submit.

"In return for his labours on behalf of the household or village the Kayan chief gains little or nothing in the shape of material reward. He may receive a little voluntary assistance in the cultivation of his field; in travelling by boat he is accorded the place of honour and ease in the middle of the boat, and he is not expected to help in its propulsion. His principal rewards are the social precedence and deference accorded him and the satisfaction found in the exercise of authority.

"If the people of a house or village are gravely dissatisfied with the conduct of their chief, they will retire to their padi-fields, building temporary houses there. If many take this course, a new long house will be built and a new chief elected to rule over it, while the old chief remains in the old house with a reduced following, sometimes consisting only of his near relatives.

"The office of chief is rather elective than hereditary, but the operation of the elective principle is affected by a strong bias in favour of the most capable son of the late chief; so in practice a chief is generally succeeded by one of his sons. An elderly chief will sometimes voluntarily abdicate in favour of a son. If a chief dies, leaving no son of mature age, some elderly man of good standing and capacity will be elected to the chieftainship, generally by agreement arrived at by many informal discussions during the weeks following the death. If thereafter a son of the old chief showed himself a capable man as he grew up, he would be held to have a strong claim on the chieftainship at the next vacancy. If the new chief at his death left also a mature and capable son, there might be two claimants, each supported by a strong party; the issue of such a state of affairs would probably be the division of the house or village, by the departure of one claimant with his party to build a new village. In such a case the seceding party would carry away with them their share of the timbers of the old house, together with all their personal property."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hose & McDougall, Vol. I, pp. 65-67.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE POLYNESIANS.

**GEOGRAPHY.** The word Polynesia, which is of Greek derivation, and means "many islands", is given to the scattered group in the Pacific which forms a great triangle with the apex at Easter Island in the east and the base between New Zealand and Hawaii in the west. The other more important islands in this group are The Caroline Islands, The Gilbert Islands, Samoa, The Friendly Islands, Tahiti, and The Society Islands. As in the case of Melanesia most of these islands are of volcanic origin although some of them have been formed from coral and are therefore almost circular in form. Frequently a single coral reef, enclosing in its midst a shallow sea or lagoon, will contain several small islands. The soil of a large number of them is but slightly productive, and they are almost destitute of fresh water. The chief nutritive plants are the sweet potato, cocoa-palms, and bread fruit trees, while there are no native animals of importance. The islands in the west are the most productive, but many of those in the east are uninhabitable because of their mountainous character. In these latter neither plant nor animal life are able to get any firm foothold.

**PHYSIQUE AND CHARACTER.** The Polynesians belong to the brown race and show in many respects a close relationship to the Malays, although some of the people in the west have intermarried with the Melanese and hence exhibit some of the characteristics of that race. However, in describing these people we will try and take typical Polynesians, that is, those who are relatively pure. The skulls are dolichocephalic which is often exaggerated by artificial deformation; low well-shaped foreheads, often causing the facial angle to be equal to that of the Europeans; noses full; faces round; eyes small, lively, usually placed horizontally, with remarkably wide opening and eloquent expression; cheek bones projecting forward rather than sideways; mouths well shaped despite thick lips. The color of the hair varies from black to chestnut brown and is closely waved or curly but never tufted or woolly as in the negroid races. The beard, when allowed to grow, is usually sparse and wiry, but as a rule it is pulled out in order that the elaborate face tattooing may be seen. On the body there is very little hair. The men are usually tall and stalwart-looking, but they possess very little bodily strength due in part at least to the indolent life which they lead.

"Under great outward vivacity lies the dullness of the uncultured nature. Even among the Christian Polynesians one is struck by the indifference with which they meet a disgraceful death at the hands of the executioner; and the tranquillity of

children at the death of their parents, particularly in blood-steeped New Zealand, has been remarked. Human sacrifices and cannibalism must have left their traces in the disposition. These evil qualities are cloaked by a childish levity. The task of the criminal law is materially lightened by their garrulity; they cannot keep a secret, even to save themselves from the scaffold."<sup>1</sup>

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** The life of most of the Polynesians is one of great ease, for nature has been kind to them in her disposition of the things necessary for this life. A small amount of work suffices for a large number of people, although the conditions here are not as favorable as those found in Melanesia. Like the people of this latter district, they obtain much food from the sea, and the canoes from which they fish are usually made from logs and have a long outrigger to steady them. The chief vegetable food is the sweet potato which they really cultivate with great care. It is considered a sacred crop and hence the planting and harvesting are attended with many ceremonies. The first potatoes dug are offered to the gods in order to insure good crops in the future.

Of the animal foods, the most important are birds, fish, swine, dogs and rats. These latter are considered to be a great delicacy and are prepared in the following way. The fur is singed off and the bones crushed, care being taken not to break the skin. The pieces of bone are extracted through the posterior orifice but the intestines and their contents left undisturbed, the vegetable substance in the stomach serving for ready-made stuffing. When cooked they are like large juicy sausages."<sup>2</sup>

During times of plenty there are two meals a day, one about ten in the morning and the other at four in the afternoon. The food is cooked in the underground ovens in a manner very similar to that of the Melanesians. They had, up to a short time ago, no pottery and hence when they wanted to boil water they put red hot stones into a wooden trough. The food is served in small baskets made of green flax, and each guest is presented with one. When the meal is over they are thrown away.

**CANNIBALISM.** Cannibalism while not common in the Hawaiian Islands yet in New Zealand it was very prevalent up to modern times. All of the prisoners taken in battle with the exception of a few, who were kept for slaves, were treated in this manner. There is an account of one chief who after he had put 250 to death turned to an attendant and said, "I am tired. Let the rest live." And so they were kept as slaves which was considered a greater disgrace than being eaten. "When bodies could not all be eaten, some of the flesh was stripped from the bones and dried in the sun, being hung on stages for that purpose. The flesh was then gathered into baskets and oil poured over it, the oil

<sup>1</sup> Ratzel, "The History of Mankind," Vol. I, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> E. Tregear, "The Maori Race," p. 106.



being rendered down from the bodies. This was done to prevent it spoiling from damp. Sometimes the flesh was potted into calabashes as birds were potted. The body of a chief might be flayed and the skin dried for covering hoops and boxes. The bones were made into fish-hooks or spear-heads. If the deceased had been a great chief care was taken to degrade every part of the skeleton. It frequently happened that the skull was made into a water vessel or other receptacle."<sup>1</sup>

**HOUSES.** The houses are always set on the ground and are for the most part elaborately carved. "They are oblong in shape, with low side walls, gabled ends, one small doorway, a window aperture placed in the end near the door, and both the two latter opening out on to a wide verandah. Inside they are from the absence of light and ventilation, dark and stuffy, but the closely woven thatch of the roof and walls exclude draughts and make them snug and cozy."<sup>2</sup> In each village there is a large assembly house which is built with great ceremony and the sacrifice of a human victim.

**MARRIAGE.** Among the people of New Zealand early marriage is not the rule, in fact the men are often very mature before they take a wife. Very considerable freedom is allowed to a young girl before marriage, and is taken full advantage of, probably, so far as flirtation and love-making are concerned. There is, however, a social public opinion in a native village which will check any approach to licentiousness, and no doubt there are plenty of offences against what we should consider propriety. However, personal modesty and individual pride make degrees of strictness here as elsewhere. It is chiefly among the lower class girls that questionable conduct is permitted, the daughters of a chief are surrounded by many restrictions.<sup>3</sup> Children are often betrothed at birth and even before they are born, and in these cases a strict surveillance is kept over them until the marriage has been consummated. As a rule the girls have a right to show preference for one man and often the love making is carried on by the girls. It frequently happens that a man will reject an offer with the result that there is much shame and irritation on the part of the girl. One of the legends tells of a stranger coming into the camp. He was seen first by the chief's youngest daughter and she claimed him for her husband. The elder protested that by right of seniority she should have him. The father settled the dispute by saying, "Oh my elder daughter! let your younger sister have the stranger-chief as husband; she saw him first." The elder girl obeyed, but was so angry that she left home for good.

If the proposal sent by a high born girl is rejected, tragic consequences often follow, and even suicide on the part of the girl may result. There is no marriage ceremony among the lower

<sup>1</sup> E. Tregear, pp. 356 ff.

<sup>2</sup> E. Tregear, p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> E. Tregear, p. 284.

classes, but the night before a girl intends matrimony she will call all her friends together and announce to them, "I am going to take a husband. So and so is his name." This is thought to be sufficient.

"Although in the middle ranks of life and in cases of regular betrothal parents arranged the matter when the parties concerned were young, yet when engagements were entered into at a more adult age the parents' consent was not so important as that of the bride's brothers and uncles. This was on account of land-transfer complications. An ancient and favourite way of marriage was to get up a war-party (or mimic war-party) and carry off the bride by force. There were so many relatives to be consulted, some of whom would be sure to feel aggrieved if their consent was not obtained, that abduction was easiest. There was often feigned abduction and feigned defence, but it was at times very hard on the girl."<sup>1</sup>

"An aristocratic marriage was accompanied by a great feast. As a general rule the house for the new couple was erected by the father of the bridegroom if the bride was to leave her own people to go to those of her intended husband. If, however, a chief had only high fighting-rank (not territory) and came to live with his wife, the bride's relatives built the house for them. The relatives generally determined when the bridal feast was to take place, and in the meantime the mats were woven, food collected, etc. At the wedding feast the bride appeared clothed in new mats and accompanied by her brothers and uncles. The priests uttered charms and incantations over the married couple, followed by long recitals of genealogies of both bride and bridegroom, and when the couple had been led to their new house the proceedings terminated."<sup>2</sup>

"A man of noble birth or position was allowed to take more than one wife, and generally his principal wife, at least, was a high-born woman. Whatever their rank, they were generally well treated and were held in high respect. Sometimes all the three or four wives were of exalted birth, and to a chief thus honoured, marriage became a means whereby his influence could be greatly augmented. Each wife would bring her retinue, her slaves and other property to add to the resources of the household and enable her husband to exercise that princely hospitality which be seemed the position of a man of aristocratic rank. The wives did not always live together in the husband's house. They (or any one of them) might prefer to live on their own lands and manage them, being visited by their husbands at certain times. If they dwelt together they seldom quarrelled among themselves; the status of each was fixed by custom and this was seldom departed from, although if a new wife was suddenly brought home there was a flutter in the dove-cote. They had little jealousy of each other; each had her own cultivation to look after and polygamy seemed

<sup>1</sup> E. Tregear, p. 293.

<sup>2</sup> E. Tregear, p. 295.

perfectly natural in a society where men were killed off in the constant fighting and divorce was easy. Old and sickly wives have been known to urge the husband to bring home a younger woman as wife, to share the work and ensure numerous offspring, for they believed barrenness to be always the woman's fault. The rule, too, that a brother should take his deceased brother's wife or wives and slaves sometimes swelled the number of the household to a great extent. Nevertheless there was hardly ever more than six wives in a household. There were often women slaves or servants about the house and they not only performed the menial work but were supposed to be sexually at the master's disposal."<sup>1</sup>

Ellis, in speaking of the morality of the inhabitants on the island of Tahiti says, "Their common conversation, when engaged in their ordinary avocations, was often such as the ear could not listen to without pollution, presenting images, and conveying sentiments, whose most fleeting passage through the mind left contamination. Awfully dark, indeed, was their moral character and not withstanding the apparent mildness of their disposition, and the cheerful vivacity of their conversation, no portion of the human race was ever sunk lower in brutal licentiousness and moral degradation, than this isolated people."<sup>2</sup>

### **SELF-GRATIFICATION.**

**CLOTHES AND BODY DECORATIONS.** The clothes and body decorations of the Polynesians are more elaborate than those found among other peoples of Oceania. The basis for much of their clothing is a bark cloth usually made from the Paper Mulberry or other similar trees. The bark is detached in long strips which are then immersed in water for several hours, and when they are sufficiently soaked are taken out and laid on a flat piece of wood. The inner bark is now detached from the outer by scraping with a piece of shell, and carefully washed. The strips are laid out side by side, until they cover a space of the required size, three layers being placed one above the other. They are left thus until the following day, by which time the percolation of the water which they have absorbed through the washing causes them to adhere together. The whole piece is now taken to a flattened beam or board, and beaten or felted together by repeated blows from short mallets of hard wood, the sides of which are usually grooved in different ways. During this operation water is continually thrown upon the cloth. When the piece has been felted to a uniform consistency, it is dried, and finally ornamented with coloured designs, either applied with the free hand, or more rarely printed by means of large frames or stamps, as in Samoa or Fiji. When very large sheets are required, smaller pieces are joined together by means of gum made from the breadfruit tree, or by stitching. Unless oiled, *tapa* rapidly deteriorates when exposed

<sup>1</sup> E. Tregear, pp. 296-297.

<sup>2</sup> W. Ellis, "Polynesian Research," Vol. I, p. 97.

to the rain. The whole process of manufacture is carried out by women.<sup>1</sup>

Both sexes wear around the waist a girdle made either from this cloth or from plaited grasses, which usually hangs down to the knees. From the shoulders hangs a cloak which is sometimes nine or ten feet long by seven wide. They are made from dog skins, woven grass, or bark cloth, and are very elaborately decorated with different designs. The most beautiful are covered with a solid mass of red or yellow feathers taken from the parrot and because of their great value are worn only by the very wealthy or by the nobility. Around the neck and in the ears are worn ornaments made from jade or other stones, bones, and teeth. These people all employ flowers in their personal decoration. They make long garlands which they twine around their necks, and put bright colored blossoms in their hair.

The most important parts of the body decorations are painting and tattooing. Frequently the whole face will be reddened, but at times half is painted red and half black. Before going out to war, the warriors are daubed in the most terrible manner in order to scare the enemy. Tattooing is indulged in more by the men than by the women perhaps because it is founded on a religious idea. The actual work is regarded as a sacred profession, and is performed by priests to the accompaniment of prayers and hymns. The figures depicted are often those of sacred animals like snakes and lizards. They tattoo the face, eyelids, nose, lips, and from the waist down by an operation which is very painful. The figures are first drawn on the skin, then a little stick, pointed bone or stone is tapped with a wooden mallet so as to form a series of punctures along the lines. These holes are then filled in with the coloring matter and allowed to heal. It is especially painful on the face, and the inflammation produced on the tender flesh is so acute that the work cannot be completed at one time. Women think that red lips are a disgrace, and so before marriage they are tattooed with blue lines. When she is a woman of high rank a day is set apart for the ceremony and a human victim, who has been procured for the purpose by a war party, is sacrificed. The body is eaten by all of the assembled people.

**AMUSEMENTS.** The pleasures of the children are very similar to those found in the most civilized and uncivilized countries. Such things as whipping tops, skipping rope, wrestling, throwing spears and ball playing are indulged in. In some of these, especially wrestling, the older people, both men and women, participate. Of course, dancing and singing play important parts in the entertainments. Some of the dances are of a pantomimic nature, but most of them are merely gymnastic, where skill in jumping, bodily contortions and ability to keep time to the music are considered the requisites of a good dancer.

<sup>1</sup> Handbook to the Ethnographical Collection of the British Museum, pp. 149-150.

Of all the Polynesians the Hawaiians have developed music to the greatest extent and much of it is pleasing to the ears of the civilized man. Whether this music is entirely natural or not we do not know, but by many it is supposed that they took the early missionary hymns and transposed them for their own religious and secular use. All the music has a very pathetic wail to it which is accentuated by the methods of playing the guitar. The instrument is placed flat on the knees. The fingers of the right hand slide up and down the strings while those of the left do the picking. The accompaniment is carried by the ukulele, which resembles in shape a very small guitar.

In these same islands surf-riding is one of the greatest amusements. Both sexes become so expert that they can balance themselves, lying, kneeling or standing on a narrow board which carries them landwards on the curling crests of the waves.

**RELIGION.** The religion of the Polynesians is largely made up of the worship of the gods and goddesses occupying the forces of nature. Other deities of worship inhabit the heavens, the lower world, the volcanoes. Around all of these has been built up an elaborate mythology wherein all the natural phenomena of nature are accounted for by the good or bad actions of these super-human beings. So closely do many of the myths follow those of ancient Greece and of early biblical times that it is not taking too much for granted if we suppose that their composition came after the white people reached the islands.

Many of the Polynesians are a blood-thirsty people and in carrying out their religious rites, sacrifice not only animals but also human beings. In Hawaii, before the higher civilization was brought to them, "human sacrifices were offered whenever a temple was to be dedicated, or a chief was sick, or a war was to be undertaken; and these occasions were frequent."<sup>1</sup> In the same place, when the goddess Pele showed her anger by causing the volcano Kilauea to erupt, men or women were thrown into the crater as a sacrifice. The myth concerning the goddess Pele, who was supposed to inhabit the volcano, Kilauea, is as follows: She, with her attendant spirits reveled in the flames; "the unearthly noises of the burning mass were the music of their dance, and they bathed in the red surge of the fiery billows as it dashed against the sides of the crater. This fire-loving family emigrated from Tahiti soon after the deluge. The volcano was their principal residence, although occasionally they renovated their constitutions amid the snows of the mountains. On such occasions their journeys were accompanied by earthquakes, eruptions, heavy thunder and lightning. The numerous eruptions with which the island has been devastated were ascribed to their enmity. They were held in highest reverence, and to insult them, break their taboos, or neglect to send offerings, was to call down certain destruction. At their call, Pele would spout her lava and destroy the offenders.

<sup>1</sup> Encycl. Brit. under Hawaii, p. 88.

Vast numbers of hogs were thrown into the crater when any fear of an eruption was entertained.”<sup>1</sup>

In Samoa, where they worshipped the sun, human sacrifices were offered every day for eighty days.<sup>2</sup> In New Zealand the war god receives the heart, liver and scalp of the first man slain.

**GOVERNMENT.** “The government of the South Sea Islands, like that in Hawaii, was an arbitrary monarchy. The supreme authority was vested in the king, and was hereditary in his family. It differed materially from the systems existing among the Marquesians in the east, and the New Zealanders in the southwest. There is no supreme ruler in either of these groups of islands, but the different tribes or clans are governed by their respective chieftains each of whom is, in general, independent of any other. Regarding the inhabitants of Tahiti, and the adjacent islands, as an uncivilized people, ignorant of letters and the arts, their modes of governing were necessarily rude and irregular. In many respects, however, their institutions indicate great attention to the principles of government, an acquaintance with the means of controlling the conduct of man, and an advancement in the organization of their civil polity, which, under corresponding circumstances, is but rarely attained, and could scarcely have been expected.

“Their government, in all its multiplied ramifications, in its abstract theory, and in its practical details, was closely interwoven with their false system of religion. The god and the king were generally supposed to share the authority over mankind. The latter sometimes personated the former, and received the homage and the requests presented by the votaries of the imaginary divinity, and at other times officiated as the head of his people, in rendering their acknowledgments to the gods. The office of high-priest was frequently sustained by the king—who thus united in his person the highest civil and sacerdotal station in the land. The genealogy of the reigning family was usually traced back to the first ages of their traditionary history; and the kings, in some of the islands, were supposed to have descended from the gods. Their persons were always sacred, and their families constituted the highest rank recognized among the people.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. J. Jarves, “History of Hawaiian Islands,” p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Tregear, p. 470.

<sup>3</sup> W. Ellis, Vol. III, pp. 93-94.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### INDIA—THE HINDUS.

**GEOGRAPHY.** India occupies an area of about 1,766,000 square miles and is situated partly in the tropical and partly in the temperate zones. The country is in the form of a gigantic triangle 1,900 miles long, which may roughly be divided into three parts: the Himalayas, the river plains, and the three-sided table land in the southern portion. The Himalayas in the north extend in the shape of a scimiter with its edge facing southward for a distance of 1,500 miles. These mountains have formed an almost impenetrable barrier across the north, northeast and northwest, so that it has been difficult for an invading army to enter the country. There are very few passes and these are at an altitude which makes travel difficult. The word "Himalaya" in Sanserit means "snow house." This region has been called "The Roof of the World," for if the Pyrenees were piled on the Alps, the Himalayas would tower above them for 4,000 feet.

At the southern foot of these mountains lies the second great division of India—the river plains of the Indus, the Ganges, and the Brahmaputra. They extend from the Bay of Bengal on the east to the Arabian Sea on the west, and contain the richest and most densely crowded provinces of the country.

The third division of the country comprises the three-sided table-land which covers the southern part of the peninsula. This area, which is known as the Deccan, is bounded on two sides by the Ghat mountains, and on the north by the Vindhya hills. The Ghats take most of the moisture from the monsoons, thus making the territory which they bound far from fertile.

**WEATHER.** The seasons of India may be divided into four: the cold season during January and February; the hot season, including the months of March, April, and May; the southwestern monsoon period, during June, July, August, September, and October; and the retreating monsoon period in November and December. In southern India the temperature is constant, while in the north there are great extremes of heat and cold. During the hot season in the northern plains the heat is greater than in any other portion of the world, yet it is possible to get to a region of snow and ice in a very few hours. The Himalayas therefore play a very important part in the life of the foreigners living in India.

**HISTORY.** India at the present time is a degraded nation, but in the past it had a civilization that ranked with that of

Greece and Egypt. It was the home of Hinduism and Buddhism (which latter is more than thirty centuries old), and which was ten centuries old before Great Britain had emerged from barbarism. A great deal of the civilization of China and Japan had its origin here. "Our earliest glimpses of India disclose two races struggling for the soil, the Dravidians, a dark skinned race of aborigines, and the Aryans, a fair-skinned people, descending from the northwestern passes. Ultimately the Dravidians were driven back into the southern table-land, and the great plains of Hindustan were occupied by the Aryans, who dominated the history of India for many centuries thereafter."<sup>1</sup>

These latter belonged to that splendid Aryan, or Indo-Germanic stock, from which the Brahman, the Rajput, and the Englishman descended. The earliest home of these people was in Central Asia, and from there they started East and West. One branch founded Greece, another Rome, a third Persia, a fourth pre-historic Spain, and a fifth became the ancient inhabitants of England. They carried with them their civilization and language from which most of the languages of Europe are descended.

We learn the early history of these people from the hymns of the Rig-Veda, and from these we are able to reconstruct the civilization of the Aryans. "The earlier hymns exhibit the Aryans on the north-western frontiers of India, just starting on their long journey. They show us the Aryans on the banks of the Indus, divided into various tribes, sometimes at war with each other, sometimes united against the 'black-skinned' aborigines. Caste, in its later sense, is unknown. Each father of a family is the priest of his own household. The chieftain acts as father and priest of the tribe; but at the greater festivals he chooses some one specially learned in holy offerings to conduct the sacrifice in the name of the people. The chief himself seems to have been elected. Women enjoyed a high position, and some of the most beautiful hymns were composed by ladies and queens. Marriage was held sacred. Husband and wife were both 'rulers of the house' and drew near to the gods together in prayer. The burning of widows on their husbands' funeral-pyres was unknown, and the verses in the Veda which the Brahmas afterwards distorted into a sanction for the practice have the very opposite meaning.

"The Aryan tribes in the Veda are acquainted with most of the metals. They have blacksmiths, coppersmiths, and goldsmiths among them, besides carpenters, barbers, and other artisans. They fight from chariots, and freely use the horse, although not yet the elephant, in war. They have settled down as husbandmen, till their fields with the plough, and live in villages or towns. But they also cling to their old wandering life,

<sup>1</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, "India," W. W. Hunter.



with their herds and 'cattle pens.' Cattle, indeed, still form their chief wealth, the coin in which payments of fines are made—and one of their words for war literally means a 'desire for cows.' They have learned to build 'ships', perhaps large river-boats, and seem to have heard something of the sea. Unlike the modern Hindus, the Aryans of the Veda ate beef, used a fermented liquor or beer made from the soma plant, and offered the same strong meat and drink to their gods. Thus the stout Aryans spread eastwards through northern India, pushed on from behind by later arrivals of their own stock, and driving before them, or reducing to bondage, the earlier 'black-skinned' races. They marched in whole communities from one river-valley to another, each house-father a warrior, husbandman and priest, with his wife and his little ones, and cattle."<sup>1</sup>

There are at the present time in India four well marked ethnographic divisions. First, the non-Aryans or aborigines; second, the Aryan, or Sanskrit-speaking peoples; third, a mixture of the above two; and fourth, the Mohammedan invaders, who came down from the northwest. These are well scattered over all India, but usually in each locality there will be a preponderance of one or the other stock. However, the barriers between these divisions have become so confused that the classification is made not along lines of blood or language, but on that of caste and religion.

**PHYSICAL FEATURES.** The Hindus are of middle size, the limbs are delicate and slender. The color of the skin varies from a dark yellow to a deep bronze or soot black, which may be accounted for by their mixture with the Dravidians. The hair, which is abundant on the face and head, is black, long and curly. The shape of the skull is mesocephalic. The face is oval with fairly high zygomatic arches. The eyes are large and dark; the eyebrows are curved and finely formed. The nose has frequently a Roman shape.

**CASTE.** Before taking up a discussion of the social life of the people of India, it is important to study the caste system, for in it lies the basis for all of their actions both social and religious.

"The cardinal principle which underlies the system of caste is the preservation of purity of descent, and purity of religious belief and ceremonial usage."<sup>1</sup>

There are four principal castes in India with many subdivisions. The inventors of this social despotism were naturally the highest in the scale, the Brahmans or priests, who claim that they sprang from the mouth of Brahma, the Supreme Being. The Rajahs, or warriors, are the second class, and sprang from the arms of Brahma. The third class, who are the Vaisyas, or landholders and merchants, came from the thighs of the god; while the last class, the Sudras, or cultivators and menials,

<sup>1</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, "India."

came from the feet of Brahma. Below these are the Pariahs, who are casteless, and are regarded as almost too vile to belong to humanity.

The Hindu adheres to this system with a tenacity which ends only with his life. "The different castes will by no means intermarry; sometimes women of high castes elope with men of lower ones; and more frequently men of high caste take into their houses women that belong to the lower;—but *inter-marriage* there is none. The distinction of caste is so rigidly adhered to, that a man of a lower caste might be dying, but a man of a higher one would refuse to let him take water out of his cup, lest it should be defiled. A Hindu would, in general, rather see his fellow man die than pass the bounds of caste to help him. According to this system the son is not at liberty to follow any trade or profession that he pleases, but must perforce continue in that which his father and forefathers have practised before him;—doing otherwise would be followed by excommunication."<sup>1</sup>

**BRAHMANS.** When a Brahman boy reaches the age of eight or nine, a thin cord, called Janeo, is placed around his body. Before this time he is considered a mere child, who possesses no religion and who can eat without bathing, but after the cord is put on, he becomes one of the class of priests and must conform to the rules which govern them.

"A young Brahman, when he can learn, begins to study at an early age. All the Sanscrit writings are considered sacred and divine and their grammars take the same rank. Sanscrit has become a dead language, and very few people can understand it well: and though this is the case, learned Brahmans, who intend to give their boys a good education, would never think of teaching them Hindee first, which in the present age is their mother tongue and which the boys could learn easily. Were they to learn Hindee first, they would be better prepared to study Sanscrit: but it is beneath their dignity, and thus a boy at once commences to repeat Sanscrit sounds, parrot-like, out of his grammar without understanding in the least degree what he repeats; this he does for seven or eight years; after which the tutor begins to explain to him what he has been repeating so long."<sup>2</sup>

"After studying one or two grammars the young Brahman goes on with other Sanscrit books, if he be in good circumstances and if his father wishes him to be a tolerably learned man;—if not, he only studies that book which teaches him the duties of a priest; this being soon over, those who stop here are not much wiser than those who have never studied any thing."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. Dass, "Manners and Customs of the Hindus of Northern India," p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> I. Dass, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> I. Dass., p. 17.

There are four stages through which a pious Brahman must pass during life. He must be a religious student, a householder, an anchorite, and a religious mendicant.

“On the youth having been invested with the badge of his caste, he was to reside for some time in the house of some religious teacher, well read in the Veda, to be instructed in the knowledge of the scriptures and the scientific or theoretic treatises attached to them, in the social duties of his caste, and in the complicated system of purificatory and sacrificial rites. According to the number of Vedas he intended to study, the duration of this period of instruction was to be, probably in the case of Brahmanical students chiefly, of from twelve to forty-eight years; during which time the virtues of modesty, duty, temperance and self-control were to be firmly implanted in the youth’s mind by his unremitting observance of the most minute rules of conduct. During all this time the student had to subsist entirely on food obtained by begging from house to house; and this behaviour towards the preceptor and his family was to be that prompted by respectful attachment and implicit obedience. In the case of girls no investiture takes place, but for them the nuptial ceremony is considered as an equivalent to that rite. On quitting the teacher’s abode, the young man returns to his family and takes a wife. To die without leaving legitimate offspring, and especially a son, capable of performing the periodical rites of obsequies, consisting of offerings of water and balls of rice, to himself and his two immediate ancestors, is considered a great misfortune by the orthodox Hindu. There are three sacred ‘debts’ which a man has to discharge in life, viz., that which is due to the gods, and of which he acquits himself by daily worship and sacrificial rites; that due to the ancient sages and inspired seers of the Vedic texts, discharged by the daily study of the scripture; and the ‘final debt’ which he owes to his *manes*, and of which he relieves himself by leaving a son. To these three some authorities add a fourth, viz., the debt owing to humankind, which demands his continually practising kindness and hospitality. Hence the necessity of a man’s entering into the married state. When the bridegroom leads the bride from her father’s house to his own home, and becomes a householder, the fire which has been used for the marriage ceremony accompanies the couple to serve them as their domestic fire. It has to be kept up perpetually, day and night, either by themselves or their children, or, if the man be a teacher, by his pupils. If it should at any time become extinguished by neglect or otherwise, the guilt incurred thereby must be atoned for by an act of expiation. The domestic fire serves the family for preparing their food, for making the five necessary daily and other occasional offerings, and for performing the sacramental rites above alluded to.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Brahmanism,” H. J. Eggeling, p. 384.

“When the householder is advanced in years, ‘when he perceives his skin become wrinkled and his hair grey, when he sees the son of his son,’ the time is said to have come for him to enter the third stage of life. He should now disengage himself from all family ties—except that his wife may accompany him, if she chooses—and repair to a lonely wood, taking with him his sacred fires and the implements required for the daily and periodical offerings. Clad in a deer’s skin, in a single piece of cloth, or in a bark garment, with his hair and nails uncut, the hermit is to subsist exclusively on food growing wild in the forest, such as roots, green herbs, and wild rice and grain. He must not accept gifts from any one, except of what may be absolutely necessary to maintain him; but with his own little hoard he should, on the contrary, honour, to the best of his ability, those who visit his hermitage. His time must be spent in reading the metaphysical treatises of the Veda, in making oblations, and in undergoing various kinds of privation and austerities, with a view to mortifying his passions and producing in his mind an entire indifference to worldly objects. Having by these means succeeded in overcoming all sensual affections and desires, and in acquiring perfect equanimity towards everything around him, the hermit has fitted himself for the final and most exalted order, that of devotee or religious mendicant. As such he has no further need of either mortifications or religious observances; but ‘with the sacrificial fires repositied in his mind,’ he may devote the remainder of his days to meditating on the divinity. Taking up his abode at the foot of a tree in total solitude, ‘with no companion but his own soul,’ clad in a coarse garment, he should carefully avoid injuring any creature or giving offence to any human being that may happen to come near him. Once a day, in the evening, ‘when the charcoal fire is extinguished and the smoke no longer issues from the fire-places, when the pestle is at rest, when the people have taken their meals and the dishes are removed,’ he should go near the habitations of men, in order to beg what little food may suffice to sustain his feeble frame. Ever pure of mind he should thus abide his time, ‘as a servant expects his wages,’ wishing neither for death, nor for life, until at last his soul is freed from its fetters and absorbed in the eternal spirit, the impersonal self-existent Brahma.”<sup>1</sup>

**WARRIORS.** The duty of the members of this class, as set down in the Hindu scriptures, is to fight for their country. They are allowed to study the Sanskrit language, but must not read the Rig-Veda. The members of this class are proud and look with contempt on all castes below them. As we see in the section on marriage, they do not want daughters, and if any are born to them they put them to death.

**LANDHOLDERS AND MERCHANTS.** Practically all the

<sup>1</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, “Brahmanism.”

trade of India, both wholesale and retail, is carried on by this third class. Many of them have little shops hardly more than coops in the wall, in which they sit in a cross-legged position surrounded by their wares. Many of this class are wealthy bankers and money-changers, especially in the larger towns and cities where this business is very lucrative. Of all the four principal classes into which Hindus are divided, this is by far the wealthiest, and some of its members are possessed of immense riches.

“The people of this class are very effeminate. They cannot endure hard work; and when they quarrel and have high words, they seldom come to blows. The saying is very common in the country that when they quarrel and threaten each other, ‘their bark is worse than their bite,’ instead of using the stones and brickbats that may be lying loose in the streets, they will pretend to loosen those that are fast in the ground; these they are unable to loosen at the time, and thus save themselves the exertion required in throwing stones at each other. As they very seldom do any hard work, the majority of them, being merchants in some way or other, sit in their shops, tailor-fashion, the whole day, and at the same time live on nourishing diet, they are inclined to be corpulent. They are the most avaricious class in the country.”<sup>1</sup>

**SUDRAS OR CULTIVATORS AND MENIALS.** “The Sudras are the most numerous of the four main castes. They form, in fact, the mass of the population, and added to the Pariahs, or outcasts, they represent at least nine-tenths of the inhabitants. When we consider that the Sudras possess almost a monopoly of the various forms of artisan employment and manual labour, and that in India no person can exercise two professions at a time, it is not surprising that the numerous individuals who form this main caste are distributed over so many distinct branches.”<sup>2</sup>

“It should be remarked, however, that those Sudra castes which are occupied exclusively in employments indispensable to all civilized societies are to be found everywhere under names varying with the languages of different localities. Of such I may cite, amongst others, the gardeners, the shepherds, the weavers, the *Panchalas* (the five castes of artisans, comprising the carpenters, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, founders, and in general all workers in metals), the manufacturers and venders of oil, the fishermen, the potters, the washermen, the barbers, and some others. All these form part of the great main caste of Sudras; but the different castes of cultivators hold the first rank and disdainfully regard as their inferiors all those belonging to the professions just mentioned, refusing to eat with those who practise them.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. Dass, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Dubois & Beauchamp, Vol. I, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Dubois & Beauchamp, Vol. I, p. 17.

In this fourth class there are also the writers, teachers, and lawyers. As few people are able to write in India, these men act as scribes, send off letters and record deeds for lands sold.

**EXPULSION FROM CASTE.** There are various offences which will cause a man to be expelled from his caste and often it is impossible for him to be reinstated.

“This expulsion from caste, which follows either an infringement of caste usages or some public offence calculated if left unpunished to bring dishonour on the whole community, is a kind of social excommunication, which deprives the unhappy person who suffers it of all intercourse with his fellow creatures. It renders him, as it were, dead to the world, and leaves him nothing in common with the rest of society. In losing his caste he loses not only his relations and friends, but often his wife and his children, who would rather leave him to his fate than share his disgrace with him. Nobody dare eat with him or even give him a drop of water. If he has marriageable daughters nobody asks them in marriage, and in like manner his sons are refused wives. He has to take it for granted that wherever he goes he will be avoided, pointed at with scorn, and regarded as an outcast.

“If, after losing caste, a Hindu could obtain admission into an inferior caste, his punishment would in some degree be tolerable; but even this humiliating compensation is denied to him. A simple Sudra with any notions of honour and propriety would never associate or even speak with a Brahman degraded in this manner. It is necessary, therefore, for an outcaste to seek asylum in the lowest class of Pariahs if he fail to obtain restoration to his own; or else he is obliged to associate with persons of doubtful caste. There are always people of this kind, especially in the quarters inhabited by Europeans; and unhappy is the man who puts trust in them! A caste Hindu is often a thief and a bad character, but a Hindu without caste is almost always a rogue.”<sup>1</sup>

Slight unintentional offences will often cause a man or a whole family to be expelled. “A number of Brahmans assembled together for some family ceremony once admitted to their feast, without being aware of it, a Sudra who had gained admittance on the false assertion that he belonged to their caste. On the circumstance being discovered, these Brahmans were one and all outcasted, and were unable to obtain reinstatement until they had gone through all kinds of formalities and been subjected to considerable expense.

“I once witnessed amongst the shepherds, an instance of even greater severity. A marriage had been arranged, and in the presence of the family concerned, certain ceremonies which were equivalent to betrothal amongst ourselves had taken place. Before the actual celebration of the marriage, which

<sup>1</sup> Dubois & Beauchamp, Vol. I, pp. 38–39.

was fixed for a considerable time afterwards, the bridegroom died. The parents of the girl, who was very young and pretty, thereupon married her to another man. This was in direct violation of the custom of the caste which condemns to perpetual widowhood girls thus betrothed, even when, as in this case, the future bridegroom dies before marriage has been consummated. The consequence was that all the persons who had taken part in the second ceremony were expelled from caste, and nobody would contract marriage or have any intercourse whatever with them. A long time afterwards I met several of them, well advanced in age, who had been for this reason alone unable to obtain husbands or wives, as the case might be."<sup>1</sup>

**SELF-MAINTENANCE.** India is almost entirely an agricultural country. According to one of the latest census reports two-thirds of the total population are employed in connection with the land, while not one-tenth of that proportion is supported by any other single industry. "The prosperity of agriculture therefore is of overwhelming importance to the people of India, and all other industries are only subsidiary to this main occupation. This excessive dependence upon a single industry, which is in its turn dependent upon the accident of the seasons, upon a favorable or unfavorable monsoon, has been held to be one of the main causes of the frequent famines which ravage India." In one year alone over 5,000,000 people died from lack of nourishment, due to the failure of the rains.

"But though agriculture thus forms the staple industry of the country, its practice is pursued in different provinces with infinite variety of detail. Everywhere the same perpetual assiduity is found, but the inherited experience of generations has taught the cultivators to adapt their simple methods to differing circumstances. For irrigation, native patience and ingenuity have devised means which compare not unfavorably with the colossal projects of government."<sup>2</sup> After a good rainy season and at other times when there are heavy falls of rain the agriculturist is saved the trouble of artificial irrigation. During the rainy season they build low walls of earth around their field in order to catch all of the moisture which falls. Wells are situated near most of the fields to be used when the period of drought sets in. The water is drawn up in leather bags by means of bullocks and dumped into little ditches which carry it to various parts of the fields.

"A farmer's business is known to be flourishing, or otherwise, by the number of ploughs that he can use on his farm and the number of pairs of bullocks that he can keep. If he is a poor man, he can cultivate a few acres only and can keep one pair of bullocks. The produce of such a piece of land can support (provided there be a timely and sufficient quantity of rain)

<sup>1</sup> Dubois & Beauchamp, Vol. I, pp. 39-40.

<sup>2</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, "India."

a family of six or seven persons,—this number including two or three children. If a farmer is in good circumstances, he can cultivate more land and keep four or five pairs of bullocks; his income is larger, and he can have a larger house, a great many brass cooking and eating utensils in his house. The women of his family can have silver and gold ornaments, and use finer and gayer stuffs for their dresses; he can oftener use finer flour and more ghee (clarified butter) in the preparation of his dishes; he can with ease and convenience keep two or three cows and buffaloes, and have an abundance of milk and butter; and he can spend larger sums in weddings and feasts and thus make more noise in the world than his poorer neighbors; in fine, he can live in comparative luxury.”<sup>1</sup>

While the natives know how to fertilize their fields and realize the value of the rotation of the crops, yet, because of the conservatism of their religion, they have not advanced as rapidly as they should. They use the same kind of a crude wooden plough pulled by bullocks as was used hundreds of years before Christ; the grain is threshed by being trodden on by bullocks, and it is winnowed by being thrown up in the air, so that the wind may carry away the chaff.

One of their most important crops is wheat, in fact, India is second or third in the world production of this grain. However, most of it is exported, for the common people are too poor to eat it. Their food consists largely of millet and, in some places, rice. To the native peoples perhaps the palm tree has the greatest value, for they get from it many articles of daily use. From the bark they make ropes and mats; from the leaves, baskets, hats and fans; from the fibre of the nut, clothing, sails and nets; from the sap, sugar; from the green fruit, milk; from the ripe fruit, solid food, and from the kernel, oil.

Cattle, as an economic resource, do not figure to any extent in India, due to the fact that animals are held sacred and hence cannot be killed for food. They do, however, use the milk for drinking and making butter. Should a man of the higher caste eat any beef, he would be ostracized at once, and no power on earth could reinstate him. Even to ask a Hindu if he eats meat, although it is a well known fact that he does so, is to insult him deeply; while to offer meat at a meal to a guest with whom one is not intimate would be the height of rudeness. “Hindus who eat meat do so only in the privacy of their own families, or in company with near relatives or intimate friends. Even the common Sudras do not offer meat at their festive gatherings, such as wedding feasts. Were they to do so, their guests would consider themselves insulted, and would leave immediately.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. Dass, “Domestic Manners and Customs of the Hindus,” pp. 39–40.

<sup>2</sup> Dubois & Beauchamp, “Hindu Manners,” Vol. I, p. 192.



The sacred cows and bulls are allowed to wander at will through the temples and streets of the cities, bedecked with garlands put there by the worshiping people, and allowed to eat where they will at the food stalls in the bazars. The British government has done all in its power to rid the towns of these sacred pests. Large numbers of these animals are led into the jungle where the wild beasts finish the good work.

The religious veneration of animals is carried to such an extent that the people will not even kill those that are dangerous to life and limb. In one year over 19,000 people died from snake bites, 947 from tigers, 260 from leopards, and 182 from wolves. During this same period 80,000 head of cattle were killed by these various animals.

**BUILDINGS.** There is in India a combination of a very high and a very low civilization. This is shown in no clearer way than in the contrast between the various types of buildings, which range from the crudest mud huts, to one of the most beautiful buildings the world has ever seen—the Taj Mahal. The poor people in the country live in mud houses, one story high, those a little better off have two stories, and still others three. In all these houses each room has only one door, and that just high enough for a man. Several houses usually face a small open square where the members of the related families, who occupy the houses, sit and talk, and where the cattle are kept during the hot part of the day. Each house has two or three small rooms, one of which is used for cooking and the others for sleeping and storing things. In front of each house is a small porch where water is kept and where the women sit. At the gate leading into the courtyard there is a room where the men sit when not at work, and where strangers and visitors are received. Strangers may go into the court yard whenever there is an occasion for it, but not otherwise. When they do go in, it is never without permission, and always with somebody that belongs in the house.<sup>1</sup>

**TAJ MAHAL.** In contrast to the simple mud buildings in which most of the people live, is the Taj Mahal which has been called “the most splendidly poetic building in the world.” This famous mausoleum was erected in 1632 at Agra by Shah Jehan to hold the remains of his favorite wife. In order to complete this edifice, 20,000 men labored twenty years.

The Taj stands on a platform of white marble 18 feet high and 313 square with tapering minarets at the corners, 133 feet high. The building itself is 186 feet square and is crowned by a dome 210 feet high. “The interior consists of four-domed chambers in the corners and an octagon in the center. The walls are of white marble and have flowers sculptured on them. Around and in these are inlaid agate, jasper, bloodstone, and

<sup>1</sup> I. Dass, pp. 120–121.

camelion. Surrounding the octagon in the center is a screen of alabaster and so finely is this carved that it needs the touch to determine whether it is made of lace or of stone. In the center are two marble cenotaphs completely covered with mosaic-work in precious stones, one hundred being sometimes used to represent a single flower; and through this mass of floral decorations runs a delicate Persian script, telling the story of these royal lovers in lines of which each letter is a gem."<sup>1</sup> The bodies of the Shah and his wife lie in these tombs.

**HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMS.** The Hindus have two meals a day—the one in the morning between eleven and twelve, the other in the evening, two or three hours after sunset. The workers get up in the morning and start to work at once. Before the first meal they bathe either in a river or with water drawn from a well. They are then clean and will not touch a person of lower caste for fear of being polluted. When they eat, they take off all their clothes, except a piece of cloth around the waist.

Meals are served on the kitchen floor, which is kept very clean. The men eat before the women. The latter do all of the cooking, bringing in the food and serving it. Should a man while eating be touched by a person of lower caste, he will immediately get up and leave his food and eject even that which he has in his mouth.

**MARRIAGE.** The Hindus believe that a woman is made for marriage and hence as soon as a girl is born, they begin to make plans for her wedding, but the matter is not actively entered into until she has reached the age of five or six. As she grows up, her ears are constantly assailed with the talk of marriage. Continually hearing of her own wedding and that of other children about her, her mind is elated with the idea of being married soon, and by hearing so much spoken of it, naturally thinks it is a state of the greatest happiness, and that there is no happiness but it.

When a girl has reached the age of six or seven, and the parents decide that it is time for her to marry, they call together the nearest relations and request them to find a suitable boy for their girl. The boys are usually sixteen, twenty, or even older before they marry. After much deliberation, a boy is found and his horoscope is compared with that of the girl's. If the priest finds that the stars of the boy are more powerful than those of the girl, he says that the marriage will be successful; but if the stars bear the opposite relation, he advises the parents of the girl to look for another boy.

When the boy has been decided upon, and the financial arrangements on both sides are satisfactory (for the girls are always sold to the highest bidder), the first ceremony takes

<sup>1</sup> J. L. Stoddard, "India," p. 224.

place at the home of the groom. The girl's parents send their priest and the family barber laden with clothes, money, and jewels, to the groom and his parents. After worship by both sides the barber puts a mark on the forehead of the boy; this is the first seal of the marriage. After several days' visit these emissaries depart for home, laden with presents to the bride.

On the day of the wedding the groom goes to the home of the bride. He is attended by many male relatives and friends, and with the procession are musicians, singers and dancers. There is much music, shooting of guns and fireworks, if the groom is wealthy enough to afford these things; if not, he has as much show as he is able to pay for. As they approach the house of the bride, some of her relatives come out to give presents to the groom and to bid him welcome. When the party reaches the house, the ceremonies begin in a shed, which has been erected in the courtyard.

During the ceremonies prayers are offered, presents exchanged, hands ceremonially washed and sacrifices made. The most significant rite in the wedding is the tying together the upper garments of the bride and groom, while the priest repeats the names of certain gods. The father of the girl puts her hand into that of the groom and they both walk around a fire, in which incense is burning. After a few more ceremonies the groom is addressed as follows:

“The bride says to you—‘If you live happy, keep me happy also; if you be in trouble, I will be in trouble too; you must support me, and must not leave me when I suffer. You must always keep me with you and pardon all my faults; and your poojas, pilgrimages, fasting, incense, and all other religious duties, you must not perform without me; you must not defraud me regarding conjugal love; you must have nothing to do with another woman while I live; you must consult me in all that you do, and you must always tell me the truth. Vishnoo, fire, and the Brahmans are witnesses between you and me.’ To this the bridegroom replies—‘I will all my lifetime do just as the bride requires of me. But she must also make me some promises. She must go with me through suffering and trouble, and must always be obedient to me; she must never go to her father's house, unless she is asked by him; and when she sees another man in better circumstances or more beautiful than I am, she must not despise or slight me.’ To this the girl answers—‘I will all my life do just as you require of me; Vishnoo, fire, Brahmans and all present are witnesses between us.’ After this the bridegroom takes some water in his hand, the Pandit repeats something, and the former sprinkles it on the bride's head; then the bride and the bridegroom both bow before the Sun in worship. After this the bridegroom carries his hand over the right shoulder of the bride and

touches her heart, and then puts some *bundun* (a coloured powder) on her *màng* or line on her head, and puts his shoes on her feet, but immediately takes them off again.”<sup>1</sup>

The wedding is now over, but if the bride is too young, she goes back to live with her parents. If she is old enough, a further rite is performed, in which the bride sits on a board belonging to the groom, and the groom on one belonging to the bride. The married women then put bells and ornaments on the feet of the bride, and the ceremony is complete.

**WIDOWS.** “A woman’s period of temporal happiness ceases when she becomes a widow; her state then is utterly helpless, unless she has a grown up son, or an affectionate brother, or some other kind near relation to support her. If she has nobody to help her, she takes off all her ornaments, which were never off her person during her husband’s lifetime; but if she has a son or a brother to maintain her, she leaves two or three of them on her person to signify that she is not utterly helpless. A widow does not wear fine or attractive clothes;—this is to show her bereaved state. Widows among the higher classes can never marry again. They might be very young, and might never have lived with their husbands, still they can never be joined to other men; the simple performance of the marriage ceremonies prevents this. As death cuts down both the old and the young, many boys, of course, who are married, die; their wives may be six or seven years old; these poor creatures are called widows, and have to pass their lives in misery; from that time they have not the least prospect of happiness, and the world is to them quite gloomy and dark. As might be expected, many of them, when in the vigour of youth or womanhood, elope with men, who offer them temptations. Widows of the middle and lower classes can marry again, and many of them who are in the prime of life, or those who have no means of support, avail themselves of this liberty. Some of them, however, who have friends to help them, refuse a second marriage—even though they are young, and beautiful, and have in consequence advantageous offers. The reason of this refusal is the regard they have for the memory of their departed husbands.”<sup>2</sup>

Before the occupation of India by the English the custom of sutteeism was in practice, that is, a widow was expected to throw herself upon the funeral pyre of her husband. By so doing she expected to have several million years with her husband in Paradise and at the same time escape the horrors of the life of a widow on earth. When a man had more than one wife, it was the custom for them to draw lots to see which was to be the fortunate one to accompany her husband.

<sup>1</sup> I. Dass, loc. cit., p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> I. Dass, pp. 176–177.

**THE POSITION OF WOMAN.** The position of women in India is little better than that of slaves. "Their only vocation in life being to minister to man's physical pleasures and wants, they are considered incapable of developing any of those higher mental qualities which would make them more worthy of consideration and also more capable of playing a useful part in life. Their intellect is thought to be of such a very low order, that when a man has done anything particularly foolish or thoughtless, his friends say he has no more sense than a woman. One of the principal precepts taught in Hindu books, and one that is everywhere recognized as true, is, that woman should be kept in a state of dependence, and subjection, all their lives, and under no circumstances should they be allowed to become their own mistresses."<sup>1</sup>

"As a natural consequence of these views, female education is altogether neglected. A young girl's mind remains totally uncultivated, though many of them have good abilities. In fact, of what use would learning or accomplishments be to women who are still in such a state of domestic degradation and servitude? All that a Hindu woman need know is how to grind and boil rice and look after her household affairs, which are neither numerous nor difficult to manage.

"Courtesans, whose business in life is to dance in the temples and at public ceremonies, and prostitutes, are the only women who are allowed to learn to read, sing, or dance. It would be thought a disgrace for a respectable woman to learn to read; and even if she had learnt, she would be ashamed to own it. As for dancing, it is left absolutely to courtesans; and even they never dance with men. Respectable women sometimes amuse themselves by singing when they are alone, looking after their household duties, and also on the occasions of weddings or other family festivities; but they would never dare to sing in public or before strangers."<sup>2</sup>

"As a rule, a husband addresses his wife in terms which show how little he thinks of her. Servant, slave, etc., and other equally flattering appellations, fall quite naturally from his lips.

"A woman, on the other hand, never addresses her husband except in terms of the greatest humility. She speaks to him as my master, my lord, and even sometimes my god. In her awe of him she does not venture to call him by his name; and should she forget herself in this way in a moment of anger, she would be thought a very low class person, and would lay herself open to personal chastisement from her offended spouse."<sup>1</sup>

"The principal daily household duties of a Hindu wife are grinding, washing the floor of the room where they cook and eat, drawing water, cooking, and scouring cooking utensils,

<sup>1</sup> Dubois & Beauchamp, Vol. I, p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> Dubois & Beauchamp, Vol. I, p. 340.

jugs and plates. Some of those that are wealthy are exempt from most of these duties, but the majority perform them.”<sup>1</sup>

**CHILDREN.** “Among the Hindus there is a great desire for male children for the following reasons:—in the first place, they expect them to perpetuate their names; secondly, they hope to be supported by them in old age; thirdly, for the performance of funeral obsequies; and lastly, they are pleased with the thought that there will be an increase of their nearer relations or of those who will be under their immediate paternal government. For these reasons that man is considered very highly favoured who has only boys in his family. These objects are not accomplished by female children; they have consequently no desire for daughters and girls are not valued like boys.”<sup>2</sup>

“Rajpoots or people of the warriors’ caste have a great dislike to female issue and have been in the habit of killing their daughters some way or other at the time of their birth. The reason why these Rajpoots do not like to have female children is that according to their peculiar custom they have to be at a great expense in marrying their daughters; the poorest must expend hundreds, and the wealthiest thousands of rupees. The former never expect to be able to marry them on account of their poverty, and the latter would rather destroy their daughters than part with their wealth.”<sup>3</sup>

**AMUSEMENTS.** The amusements of the Hindus are very similar to those found among others on this stage of development and therefore cannot be gone into much in detail. They enjoy such things as horse-racing, fencing, shooting, and wrestling.

There is one class of men known as jugglers or fakirs, who travel from town to town, exhibiting their tricks. Many of them are very clever in their ability to deceive the public and a great number of Europeans who have, at various times, tried to fathom their secrets have failed. They will, for instance, throw a rope into the air, and it apparently stays there without any means of support. A man will climb the rope and when he reaches the top disappear. Another favorite trick is to grow a small tree out of doors in a very short time from a seed.

In this same general class of people are the snake charmers. These men have baskets of snakes which they carry with them. By blowing on little flutes, the snakes are caused to coil around in a most fantastic manner. The men claim to be able to rid a house of any snakes that may be in it. But before undertaking to do it, they put, unseen, one of their own snakes into a hole in the house. Then when they blow the flute, the snake comes

<sup>1</sup> Dubois & Beauchamp, Vol. I, p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> I. Dass, loc. cit., pp. 152–153.

<sup>3</sup> I. Dass, p. 171.

out and crawls back into its basket, the man takes his fee, and goes on to the next town.

There are frequent puppet shows, which are very similar to the Punch and Judy shows in this country. A man stands in back of the little stage to work the figures while another in front recites and sings to accompany the actions. These little shows are carried from place to place and set up wherever an audience can be collected.

The greatest source of amusement and diversion to the Hindu is the dancing girls. They appear at weddings and on many of the principal holidays. These dancing girls lead an irregular life. They are all good looking and some have extraordinary beauty, for upon this depends their success in this occupation. The following description is given by one who has witnessed many of their dances: "The dancing girls who perform at private entertainments adapt their movements to the taste and character of those before whom they exhibit. Here, as in public, they are accompanied by musicians playing on instruments resembling the violin and guitar. Their dances require great attention from the dancers' feet being hung with small bells, which act in concert with the music. Two girls usually perform at the same time; their steps are not so mazy and active as ours, but much more interesting; as the song, the music, and the motions of the dance combine to express love, hope, jealousy, despair, and the passions so well known to lovers, and very easy to be understood by those who are ignorant of other languages."<sup>1</sup>

**CLOTHING.** "A woman's costume consists of a simple piece of cotton cloth, made all in one piece, and woven expressly for the purpose. It is from 30 to 40 feet long, and rather more than 4 feet wide. All sorts and kinds are made, in every shade and at every price, and they always have a border of a contrasting colour. The women wind part of this cloth two or three times round their waists, and it forms a sort of narrow petticoat which falls to the feet in front; it does not come so far down behind, as one of the ends of the cloth is tucked in at the waist after passing between the legs, which are thus left bare as far as, or even above, the calf. This arrangement is peculiar to Brahman women; those of other castes arrange their draperies with more decency and modesty. The other end of the cloth covers the shoulders, head, and chest. Thus the clothing for both sexes is made without seams or sewing—an undeniable convenience, considering how often they have to bathe themselves and wash their garments; for Brahman women have to observe the same rules of purification as the men, and are equally zealous in the performance of this duty. The custom of women veiling their faces has never been practised in India, though it has been in use among many other

<sup>1</sup> I. Dass, p. 151.

Asiatic nations from time immemorial. Here the women always go about with their faces uncovered, and in some parts of the country they also expose the upper half of their bodies.”<sup>1</sup>

The Hindus are all fond of ornament and a man’s wealth is judged by the amount of gold, silver, and precious stones which he and the members of his family can wear. Silver and gold rings are worn on the arms, ankles, in the ears, and even through the nose. Around their necks they wear strings of pearls and other stones and heavy gold chains. Many women have on their feet regular chain armor of gold and silver, and they have bells attached to each toe, which ring as they walk. In order to make the hair more glossy and silky, they oil it; and then part it in the middle. A large knot is made of the hair behind the left ear. As hair decorations they wear sweet-smelling flowers and ornaments of gold.

**RELIGION.** There are many religions at the present time in India, among the most important of which are Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Jamism, Christianity, Parseeism, and Animism. Of these the one which has the great following is Hinduism, with over 207,000,000 people. The term Brahmanism is frequently used in connection with this religion, but there is really no distinction between the two either in their religion or social organization.

**HINDUISM.** Hinduism is an aggregate of many forms of belief and did not spring from the teachings of any one man, as did Mohammedanism, Buddhism and Christianity. “The oldest document of Indian religion, and indeed of Aryan religion in general, is the Rig-Veda, or ‘Lore of the Verses,’ a collection of hymns to various gods which were composed for the worship of the Aryan tribes invading India, during the earlier centuries of their dwelling in the land \* \* \* \* Some of the deities thus worshiped are simply forces of nature, over whose purely physical character the poets cast only a thin veil of allegory and metaphor. Such are Father Heaven, and Mother Earth, the Dawn-goddess, the Sun-god, and the Wind-god. With other deities, new attributes and trains of ideas have been connected which tend to obscure their original character.”<sup>2</sup>

As the years advanced, the number of gods increased, until finally out of the great number arose three principal ones, Brahma, the god of creation, Vishnu, the god of preservation, and Siva, the god of destruction. The worship of these three gods and the conception of the caste system form the kernel of Hinduism. Besides these three main gods, there are numerous other lesser ones which the pious Hindu reckons to the number of three hundred and thirty millions.

The Hindus believe in the sanctity of all life and hence the

<sup>1</sup> Dubois & Beauchamp, Vol. I, pp. 343-344.

<sup>2</sup> L. D. Barnett, “Hinduism,” p. 4.



animals come in for their share of the worship. To this belief is now added the almost universal belief in the incarnation of souls in every kind of living thing. Among the principal animals are monkeys, bulls, birds, and snakes.

It is safe to say that there is not an object on earth which the ordinary Hindu is not prepared to worship.

Nearly all the acts of life have some religious ceremonial connected with them; this is especially true in the higher castes.

To those who hold strongly to the religious teachings, there is a feeling that some time in their lives they must make a special trip to the River Ganges. By washing in its sacred water, they think that their sins will be carried away, and if they can die on its banks, the future life will be one long period of bliss for them.

John L. Stoddard describes a scene which he witnessed along the Ganges at Benares. "Engaging a boat, with natives to row us, we floated slowly down the Ganges. The sights here on its northern bank are almost indescribable. Imagine a panorama three miles long, which, as your boat glides down the current, seems to unroll itself before you. Put up your hands like opera-glasses to your eyes and look at any portion of it singly, and you might fancy it to be an elaborate theatre-curtain; for the background is a long high cliff, covered with turreted walls and strangely pointed domes, ascending tier above tier from the broad river to the bright blue sky.

"Along the river-bank, in one unbroken line, descend broad staircases of stone, and on these steps stand, literally, thousands of Hindus, praying, conversing, meditating, bathing, or carrying away in jars the water of the hallowed stream.

"As early as an hour after sunrise, I found these stairways thronged with men, women, and children, clad merely in a wisp of cotton, yet mindful only of one thing, besides which all else in the universe was for a moment worthless,—their bath in the Holy Ganges; for they believe that its thrice-sacred flood will purify their souls, if not their bodies, and wash away all taint of sin.

"I speak reservedly of the effect which bathing here may have upon their bodies, for at Benares the Ganges is filthy in the extreme. Happily for the reputation of the Hindus this is not caused entirely by the blackness of their sins. Other more practical causes can be found. Sewers discharge their contents into the midst of all these bathers. Bushels of faded flowers, which have served as offerings in the temples, are cast into the river here and float in fetid masses on its sluggish surface. Moreover, among these rotting and offensive weeds are the remains of human bodies which have been partially cremated on the shore. Add to this the fact that, all day long, thousands here cleanse their bodies and their clothing, and one

can faintly comprehend the condition of this water. Yet every bather takes up in his hands some of this filthy, mucilaginous fluid, and drinks it. Even worse than this, beasts of burden carry away into the country gallons of this river-water, which finds ready purchasers; for, though the English Government provides here a good supply of filtered water, the people of Benares prefer to use the unadulterated 'Holy Ganges,' and come long distances to fill their jars with it and take it home. What wonder, then, that there is always cholera at Benares, and that this valley of the Ganges is a perfect laboratory of infection—a paradise of microbes—a constant source of danger to the Western world? In almost every instance where cholera has ravaged Europe, Asia, or America, its origin has been distinctly traced back to a starting point in India, where it first appeared among the crowds of filthy, half-starved pilgrims to the Ganges.

"Though there are miles of stone steps on this sacred shore, open to all comers, they do not at times afford sufficient space for the pilgrims, and wooden piers have in addition been built out into the stream. Selecting one man on the spot for observation, I saw him dip himself completely three or four times; then he took up a little of the water in his hands and drank it; and, finally, pinching his nose between his thumb and forefinger, he held his breath as long as possible while mentally repeating the name of God. The only part of this performance that I could really understand was the necessity of holding his nose! Most of the men, and many of the women here, had their heads closely shaved, for they are told that for every hair thus sacrificed they will secure a million years in Paradise.

"Conspicuous among these places for ablution was a mud-hole at the foot of a steep bank, between two broken flights of steps. So filthy and neglected did this spot appear, that I could hardly believe the statement that here are burned the bodies of all Hindus—rich and poor alike—who have the happiness of dying at Benares. 'Happiness,' I say; for to expire beside the Ganges is considered a sure passport to eternal bliss.

"After minute inspection of these scenes during several hours, we landed at one point to see the so-called 'Well of Purification.' It is a tank, about thirty feet in depth, supposed to have been dug originally by the Hindu deity, Vishnu, and to be, even now, partially filled with his perspiration. After inhaling one good whiff from it, I was quite ready to believe the statement; for it absolutely reeks with the effluvia of rotten flowers and the impurities of dirty millions who bathe themselves in the well before they step into the sacred stream itself. Yet I saw at least a dozen people drink this loathsome liquid. Priests serve it out by the ladle-full in exchange for money. A single swallow of that putrid mixture, it is affirmed,

is warranted to drive out every particle of sin from the vilest criminal on earth; and I must say, it appeared to me strong enough to do so."<sup>1</sup>

If possible, bodies are burned by the river. Before the English rule was felt, if the people were wealthy, enough wood was used to consume the corpse, but if poor, the body was half burned and then thrown in the river among the bathers.

In certain parts of India, where the Parsee religion is dominant, bodies of the dead are consumed by birds. Circular buildings of white stone, known as "Towers of Silence" are situated in groves of trees. The bodies are brought in by the priests and placed on iron gratings open to the sky. Within fifteen minutes only the bones are left, and these soon fall to a crypt below.

<sup>1</sup> Stoddard, *India*, pp. 74-83.



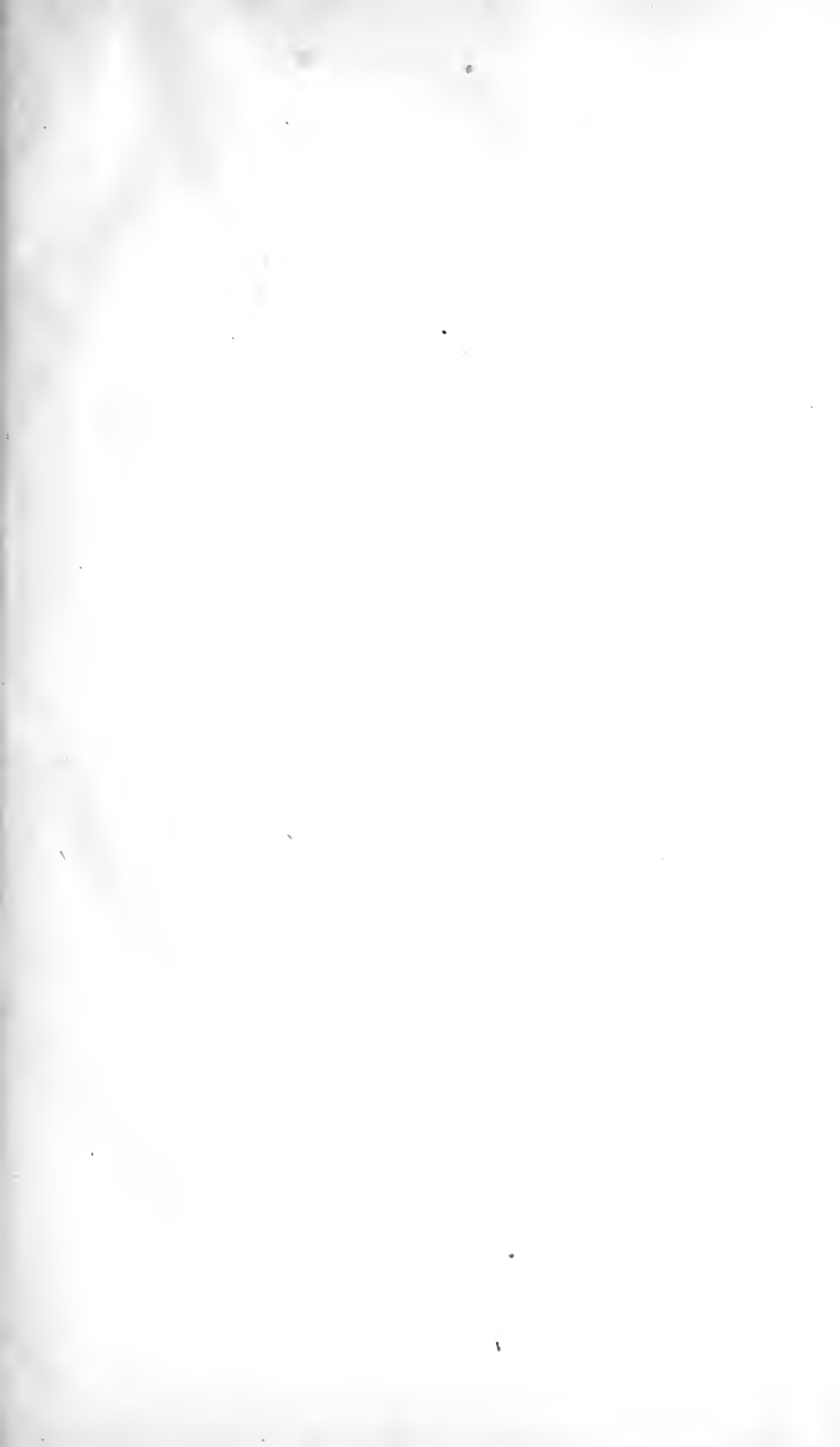
























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